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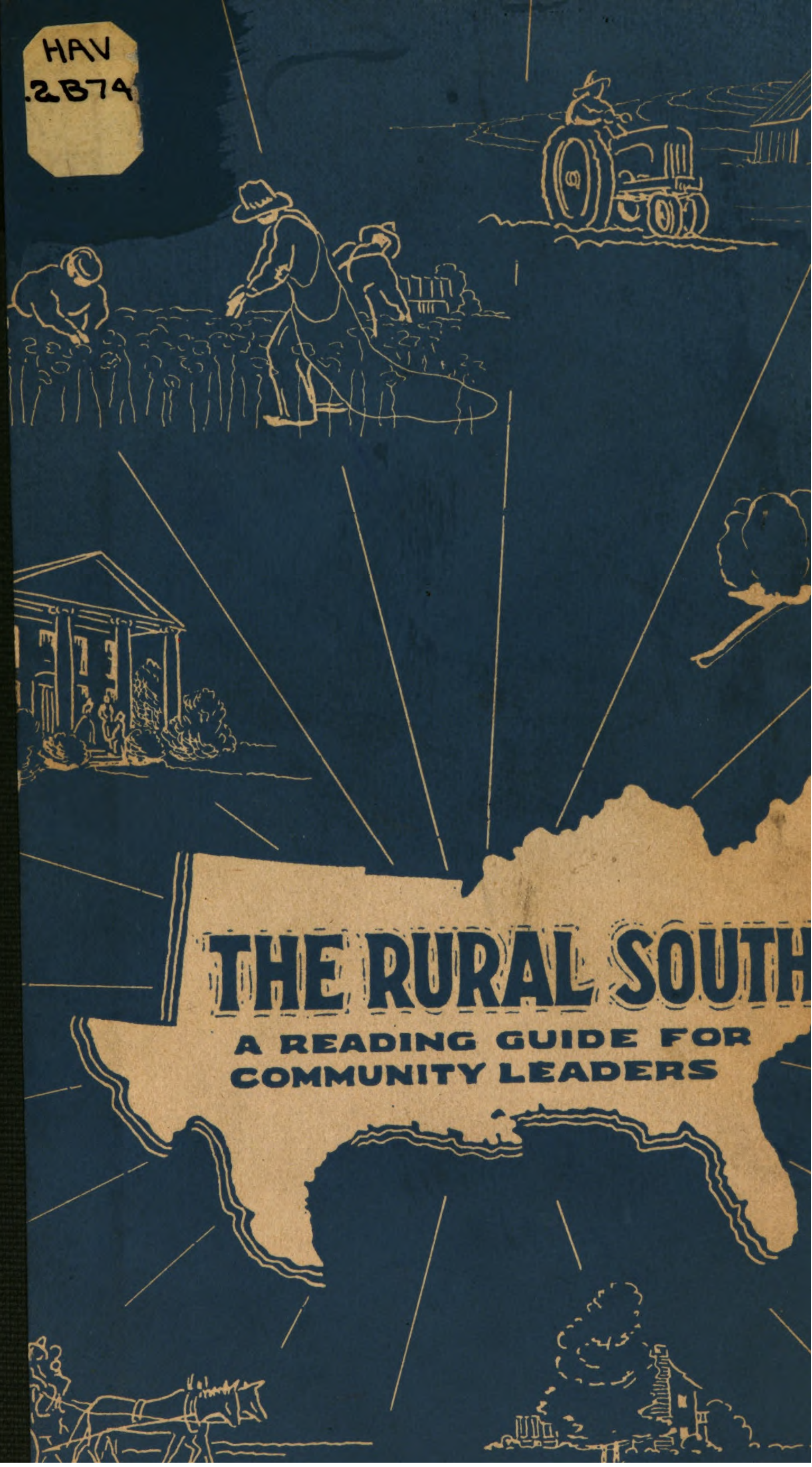

THE RURAL SOUTH

A READING GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

The Southern Rural Life Council is a cooperative project sponsored by four Nashville, Tennessee, institutions—Peabody College, Scarritt College, Vanderbilt University, and Fisk University. Its purpose is to utilize available resources, human, institutional, and natural in developing a comprehensive continuing program of community development. The Council, through its director and staff, cooperates and collaborates with institutions, agencies, and individuals working to improve the quality of rural life in the South.

THE RURAL SOUTH

A READING GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

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FOREWORD

Enduring community improvement becomes possible as people in local communities become aware of problems and needs and become conscious that there may be better ways of doing things. The primary responsibility for improving the quality of life in the rural communities of the South rests upon local community leaders.

Aided by the many national, regional, and state agencies interested in improving the quality of rural life, rural community leaders in the South are initiating and maintaining community programs designed to serve the home, to build individual and community health, to provide wholesome recreation, to develop civic responsibility, to encourage scientific farming, and to provide cultural and spiritual experiences. Enthusiastic rural community leaders intelligently active can bring vitality and a new significance into southern rural life.

Because of the absence of adequate library facilities, southern rural community leaders are often unable to obtain books suited to their needs. Even town libraries usually provide too few books to permit comparative selection or choice for special conditions. The need for selected reading materials on the rural South readily available prompted the publication of *The Rural South.*

The Rural South is a guide to reading on the rural South for community leaders. It is designed to guide local community leaders interested in community development to books of information and help. The books described have been carefully selected from lists suggested by members of the advisory committee of the Southern Rural Life Council. In the final choice, however, many excellent volumes had to be omitted because of limited space, the relative duplication of material, or the unavailability of the volume to the general reader.

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Each of the books has been carefully read and briefly summarized. For many books a short evaluation is given for the guidance of possible purchasers. The summaries give a sampling of the material in the volume under review. These samples, it is hoped, will be valuable to community leaders even without reference to the book itself. They were prepared, however, especially to guide the reader in seeking the volume most suited to his needs. The evaluations represent the opinions of the reviewers and are not to be considered as the judgments of the Southern Rural Life Council.

The Southern Rural Life Council is most grateful to the many persons who contributed to the preparation of *The Rural South.* Appreciation is specifically expressed to the editors, H. C. Brearley and Marian Tippit; to Ruth Hines Temple for the illustrations; to Mary Ann Tanksley for the preparation of most of the summaries; to Mabel LeCornu, Bertha McCallum, Sarah McCracken, Will P. Saunders, Halcyone Wheeler, and members of the Peabody class in southern social problems for the preparation of summaries and evaluations.

John E. Brewton

April, 1946

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PICTURES OF SOUTHERN RURAL LIFE

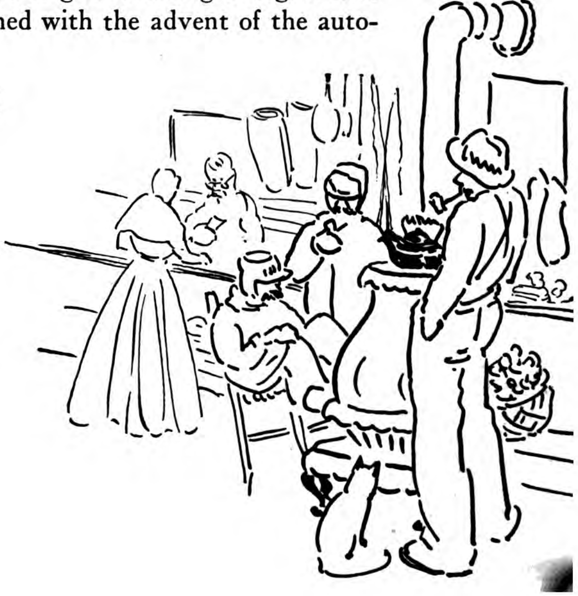
CLARK, THOMAS D. *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1944, 359 pp. $3.50.

This delightful book is a history of the country store in the South from 1865 to 1915. Following the Civil War large landholdings were broken up into smaller farms, and there was a demand for merchandise in small individual quantities. To meet this demand, crossroads stores popped up like mushrooms. The author states that the purpose of this book is to "present an account of the country store as it affected the everyday life of the rural South."

One function of this long structure, lifted high off the ground by huge stone posts, was to house everyday needs ranging from pills and petticoats to plows. Showcases displayed proudly bright ribbons, purses, and notions of various sorts. Bolts of goods reared themselves boldly out of narrow apertures. There were shoes, tools, groceries, coal oil, chewing tobacco, and snuff—truly a buyer's paradise. Then to add to the comfort of a chilly day, the rounded stove was on hand to lend warmth to its encircling group.

The storekeeper himself was a many-sided character: banker, postmaster, bookkeeper, merchandiser, and philosopher. A hard worker, he did not shirk his duties but proudly exercised the functions of his calling. The country store wielded tremendous influence on the political, religious, social, and economic life of the area.

While Mr. Clark gives an authentic picture of the old rural South, with all its woes and miseries, to a reader who remembers the country store, this book is sure to give a feeling of regret that an old pattern of rural life vanished with the advent of the automobile and the chain store.

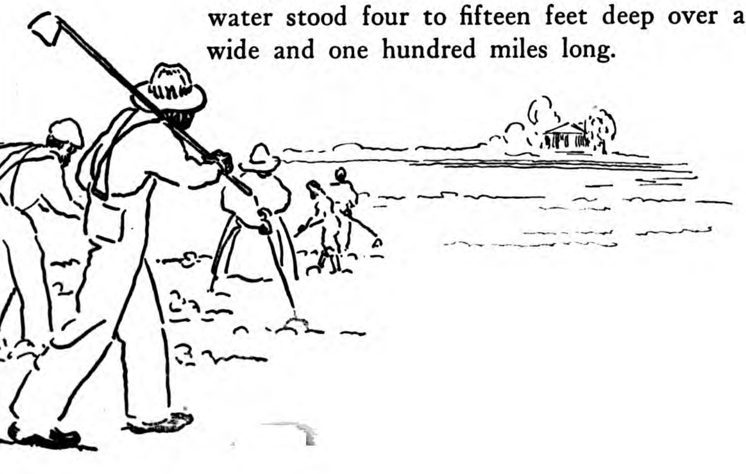


Cohn, David L. *God Shakes Creation.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1935, 299 pp. $3.50.

This book is a description of life in the Mississippi Delta. It is concerned with the patterns in a social structure by which two widely differing races live in harmony.

"Four centuries ago the first Negroes came to America, and for a hundred years they have lived in the Delta." The Delta, according to Mr. Cohn, begins in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and ends on Catfish Row in Vicksburg. The civilization for this area may appear simple, but beneath the surface it is filled with complexities and contradictions. The principal fact necessary to an understanding of these paradoxes is that there are 293,000 Negroes and 98,000 whites. Mr. Cohn gives several examples of the distortions and stresses this situation brings. In the Delta no white man will call a Negro *Mister.* But as one of them who has been in Boston for a while said: "Dey calls a nigger 'Mister' up dare, but it ain't a white man will give you two bits to put somethin' in ye' stomach when you'se hungry." In the Delta a Negro feels that when the extremity is reached, there will always be a white man willing to fill his stomach. Another example of this code is seen in the life of a famous physician who was always ready to do his part in the lynching of a Negro guilty of assault on a white woman, but who spent hundreds of nights in Negro cabins awaiting the birth of a child, served many of them without pay, and even bought medicine when the patient could not.

The fears of the Delta land are God and the Mississippi River. It has good reason to be afraid of the Mississippi, for in the 1927 flood, even with the aid of the federal flood control program, the water stood four to fifteen feet deep over an area thirty miles wide and one hundred miles long.



The great taboo of the Delta is that there shall never be, under any circumstances, a sexual relationship between a white woman and a Negro man. "Yet white men have not hesitated to pour their blood into the veins of Negroes." Among the Delta Negroes themselves, sexual relations are simple and natural. Only recently have they begun to contract legal marriages, and even so for unusual reasons. The men have found that white folks regard the killing of another man who is tampering with their woman more leniently if they have a "cote-house license," and the women have found it simpler in claiming life insurance funds.

Magic still holds an important place in the Delta, and both the young and old have a strong belief in hoodoo. The Delta Negro moves in two separate worlds—one of theaters, automobiles, and medicines; a second of conjure and magic, forever hidden from the whites.

The crimes of the Delta are those primarily of violence. The whole area is "an armed camp." Almost every person carries arms of some sort, and "nowhere are crimes of violence committed with less hesitation than in the Delta." And "nowhere do criminals escape with lighter punishment."

The author discusses the sharecropper system as it operates in the Delta, and he has much to say in reply to those who accuse southern planters of keeping millions of blacks in a state of cruel peonage. The imperfect sharecropper system was born of necessity, and it has continued because no better method has been found. According to Mr. Cohn, "It seems certain that more and more croppers would rise to land ownership if they were more industrious, if they helped themselves without the never-ending compulsion of the white man, if they employed their abundant leisure profitably, if they saved their money and had the ambition and the will to rise."

DABNEY, VIRGINIUS. *Below the Potomac.* New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1942, 332 pp. $3.00.

Below the Potomac is an examination of the social, economic, educational, racial, and political conditions in the South. Mr. Dabney surveys the existing situation and indicates its problems as well as its encouraging aspects.

The author states that the erroneous notions generally accepted about the South are legion. The South is not a land inhabited solely by "degenerates drooling tobacco juice" any more than it is a society of "crinoline belles and burnt-cork Negroes." One major misconception concerning the region is that the cost of living is far less than that of the rest of the country. Unfortunately, the lower southern income only means a lower standard of living. It is dangerous to generalize about the South, and he "who would pluck out the heart of its mystery must view the regional canvas in its entirety, focusing upon its social penumbra no less than upon its brightest coruscations and its blackest depths."

In discussing politics in the South, Mr. Dabney indicates the principal reasons why demagoguery flourishes. One is the low level of education and inadequate plane of living for the masses of the people; another is the large percentage of Negroes and their economic rivalry with the poor white.

The FSA has done much to point the way for a better life for the tenants, sharecroppers, and migrant laborers. The TVA seems to be providing the best large-scale agricultural planning being done in America. Undoubtedly there have been some errors made, but these agencies, with the WPA, PWA, CCC, REA, and slum clearance projects, have gone far in giving the average man a decent chance at the good things of life.

In the matter of education, such arbitrary measurements as cost of plant, salaries, endowment, and so on, the South does not seem to have recovered completely from the blow dealt it in the Civil War. Negro education has made tremendous strides, although there have been and still are wide discrepancies between expenditures on education for the whites and the Negroes. The almost unsurmountable difficulties the South faces, with the largest number of children and the lowest taxable resources, make it obvious that unaided it will not be able to develop public schools for either race equal to those in other parts of the country.

The lowering of its illiteracy rate has meant that the South is far better informed now than in 1914-1918, and more aware of the nation's international dangers than other sections of the country. "Although Erskine Caldwell made the strange assertion in 1941 that the South's interventionist attitude is just another sign of the South's ignorance, the fact is that this region grasped the true significance of this world struggle more quickly than any other part of America."

One is inclined to agree with Senator Norris, who said: " 'When I read of the terrible things that happened to the South after the Civil War . . . I wonder now how the South has done such a remarkable work in the way of recovery. . . . The people of the South have done a wonderful job.' "

There are many problems yet to be solved. One of the worst is the South's large group of "marginal and sub-marginal people so long without hope." Another is its poor health. Still others will include higher wages, better industrial housing, more professional and industrial opportunities for the Negro, and improvement in education.

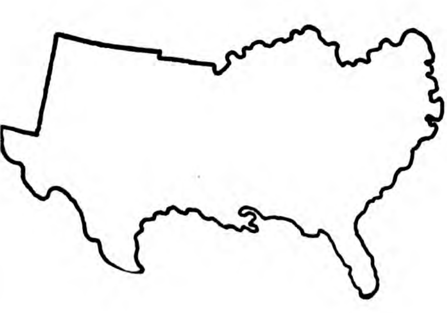
Daniels, Jonathan. *A Southerner Discovers the South.* New York: Macmillan, 1938, 346 pp. $3.00.

It occurred to Jonathan Daniels that, as editor of the *Raleigh News and Observer,* he was continually discussing southern problems without having seen very much of the South, so he went to look at it.

He spent a summer and drove 3,000 miles looking. Wherever he went he saw people, talked with them or frequently listened to their talk. He saw the TVA; the federal resettlement project at Dyess, Arkansas; the cooperative plantation that idealists are running at Hillhouse, Mississippi; the ghost of Huey Long stalking through Louisiana; Mobile; the Sewanee River; Birmingham; Atlanta; and Charleston. He visited factories, plantations, abject tenant farmers, and gilded government experiments. He interviewed governors and hitch-hikers.

He falls into the provincial attitude of taking for granted that everybody in the world knows Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So of Such-and-Such, merely because southerners are supposed to know, or know of, everybody who is anybody from Virginia to Florida.

The reader gets a feel of the contemporary region, some of its charm, its dilapidation, its beauty, despair, comedy and tragedy, and a hint of its direction. He gives a sense of the sprawling diversity and violent contrasts that characterize the southern scene. He does not spare the South but sees the region in all its self-delusion and pretense and triflingness. He comes to an end of his travels in the discovery of the South, with a recognition of the many problems confronting the region and a desire to present a plan that will solve these problems.



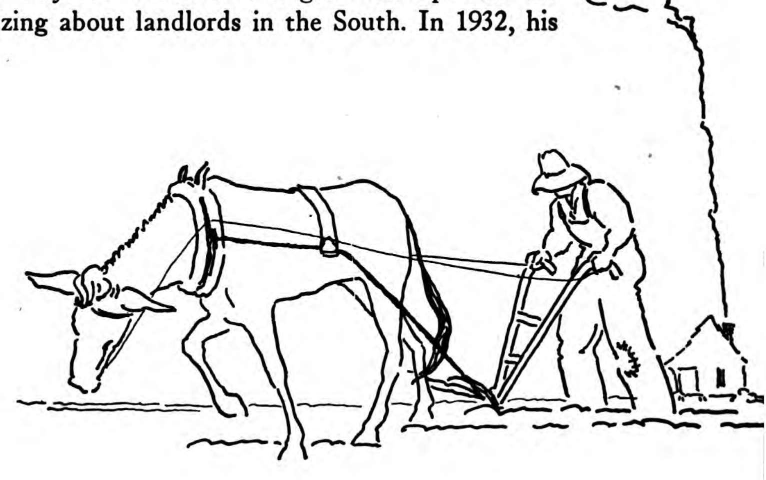
Federal Writers' Project. *These Are Our Lives*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939, 421 pp. $2.00.

In *These Are Our Lives,* thirty-five principal characters tell their own stories. The purpose of the collection is to "give a fair picture of the structure and working of society" in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. Thus there are segments of life histories from various strata—tenant farmers, owners, factory workers, merchants, odd-job workers, and even a justice of the peace.

The problems of the South which have been treated in a thorough manner in other books are evident here, but there is a difference in the way in which they are approached. In this account social conditions are told only from the standpoint of the individual himself, and with the vivid authenticity of actual experience. We know, for example, that the farm owner in the South is very near the bottom of the social pyramid. But we don't know it nearly so well as John Eaton, who lives on four or five dollars a week and keeps promising his wife: "You're gonna have lace curtains someday, Sarah. Just as shore as God spares my life for a little while longer, you're gonna have them lace curtains."

Martin, a cash renter, knows, too, from experience that something is wrong with the tenancy and sharecropping system when he says: "Mrs. Pearson won't give me a five-year lease and so I can't afford to make any improvements. If I was sure I could stay on, I would make over the house, and clear more land."

Not all of this book is devoted to the poor, the dissatisfied, or the uneducated; there are stories, too, of the owners, and the well-to-do. Marsh Taylor's account is a good example of the danger of generalizing about landlords in the South. In 1932, his



neighbor, Pete Martin, said to one of the Negro tenants who asked for Christmas money: "Hell, no. I won't give you a goddam cent. I need what I have for my own family." So Peter Martin's tenants stole his bags of peanuts, cotton, and corn and sold them. The same hard year Marsh Taylor called together his tenants, who owed him $16,000 with no security, and promised them part of the money they had helped him make until times could get better. As a result, Marsh tells the interviewer, "I haven't had a man to leave me in nineteen years."

The factory workers often have no happier existence than the tenant farmer. The young overall worker, who planned to go to college until his father died, expresses his attitude: "Before I'd work in a place like this again—why, I'd rather die first!" The government restrictions in some cases did more harm than good by encouraging the "stretch out" system. It gave a person barely time to do his own job, and visiting among other workers, as Kate Brumly says she did, was out of the question.

Even the cotton mills have their defenders. The feeling of Smith Coon, a yard overseer, is evident in the title of his story, "I'd Take The Mill Anytime." Smith began working in the mill when he was nine years old, and at fifty-nine owns his own spacious and comfortably furnished home.

The workers in service occupations have their chance to talk, too. The first of these is the country doctor whose job is really a "service occupation." Often he has not only prescribed for a patient, but has sometimes had to nurse, provide food, and even cut wood for the fire. Another man who can miss his sleep is John Merritt, the truck driver. Merritt likes "the uncertainty and chance of trucking," but seven hours' sleep in two nights can "wear a man down."

JOHNSON, CHARLES S. *Shadow of the Plantation,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934, 215 pp. $2.50.

Far to the South in the rural habitations of the southern Negroes there still bends the grimy toiler, ill-clad and underfed, in the endless rows of cotton cultivation; still prevalent is the one-room shack of his abode, yielding to the chill of winter rains and sweltering in the force of summer suns; still existent are the ignorant superstitions and beliefs of a once enslaved society that knew only bondage and labor as their portion in life. Still a part of an advanced civilization is a pattern of social culture which leans backward although it attempts to move forward in its halting effort to seek advancement and shake off the pernicious after-effects of an institution of the past—plantation slavery.

Shadow of the Plantation is a study of the psychological influence of slavery from the 1860's through more than half a succeeding century. Although removed from the shackles of physical servitude, a dejected and bewildered people run their course in life hemmed in by tradition, silent and ghostlike, which reaches out of the past and encircles with invisible bonds of restraint—bonds that are akin to slavery, for although indefinable and intangible, they are as fixed and terrorizing.

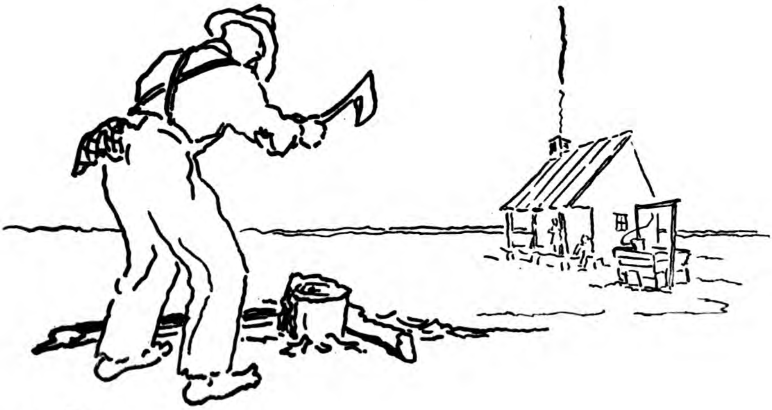
Freedom brought with itself no promise to the ignorant minds of the masses, but afforded rather exploitation which even the ignorant could sense and accept in hopeless submission. In the broken cultural heritage of Negro tenantry, the race has become so completely obsessed with a sense of its own inferiority that all zest for life and joy of living has been lost. "Their sense of dependence has crystalized into a sort of practical philosophy," writes the author.

Family types have a number of traits in common—size of family, matriarchal dominance, specific moral codes, strong affectional ties, and lack of formal social restraint. From quasi-families to non-legal unions, from totally disorganized to fairly stable family patterns, the race is propagated and breeds with an energy characteristic of the fertile area in which the inhabitants have their existence.

Economic life of the area reflects the unfavorable aspects of the division of agricultural labor and the pressure exerted under the present system of farming, encased in the "shell of the past," as contrasted with the practices of new agriculture. "The waste of the soil, the overproduction of cotton, the constant involvement of the credit system, have brought on an inevitable stagnation, both for planters and for the Negroes whose lives are linked with its ever declining fortunes."

In the field of education, inadequacies are gross and wholly discernible. "The irony of the situation seems to be the fact that the life of a tenant in the economic system under which they live is not always congenial when he begins to broaden his horizon," explains Mr. Johnson. In the field of health, the shadow of disease looms in gigantic proportions when compared with the slight measures which have been taken to decrease the rate of mortality.

The only agency which fulfills the needs of its people is the church—the sole institution over which the Negroes themselves exercise control, and which "holds out a world of escape from the hard experiences of life common to all." A ray of hope for the future is offered by the author when he hints at the overthrow of plantation economy by a complete revolution of the southern agricultural system.



LEIGHTON, CLARE. *Southern Harvest.* New York: Macmillan, 1942, 157 pp. $3.50.

Southern Harvest is a book to enjoy. Clare Leighton, who came from England several years ago, has presented in words and through her woodcuts those impressions "of one who has wandered over the South through several years, loving it and its people." The author tells us she has never intended to say, "This is the South," but only, "I have seen this."

Throughout the book there is one deep dominating theme—the universality of man's acts of toil and harvest. At the watermills, at the corn-shucking, and at the "lasses boilin'" there is this sense of the universal ritual of those who win their harvest from the earth. There is a deep sense of ritual, too, at the hog-killing, and even this "pageant of slaughter" is in some ways beautiful. The tenderness of the Negroes robs the killing of terror and ugliness; it is not the hate-inspired death which soaks with blood the earth of Europe.

The attitude of gentleness seems to be prevalent everywhere—in the eyes of the "po' white," who has fallen so far in the world; in Ollie, the old Negro whose granny had been a slave, and who neither wanted nor understood freedom; and in the face of the little girl at the courthouse square listening to the song her daddy loves—for her daddy is in prison for twenty years.

Throughout the author has never failed to bring out her theme of the sanctity and universality of life close to the earth. The overpowering ballad of the mountains and the sorghum mill, lasting though primitive, are but a part of a strong simple pattern of life.

MILLER, NORA. *The Girl in the Rural Family*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935, 108 pp. $1.50.

The social and economic forces which have led the rural girl into new centers of interest and activity since World War I have sometimes been broadening and good, and sometimes the cause of much unhappiness. Studies of six occupational families reveal the status of the typical out-of-school girl in the rural areas of the mountains, the mines, cotton fields, tobacco fields, fishing communities, and potato farms. A description of the family and community life in each of these occupations shows the common characteristics of these families regardless of their occupations. They have little attachment to the community except through the school. The girl in these families is usually forced to quit school when she is thirteen or fourteen years of age. She has no recreation and few friends. Her role in the home is generally that of an unpaid servant.

The superior rural family gives the girl social heritage, educational advantages, and financial security. The girl in the dependent family has very little opportunity to adjust herself to accepted social standards of the community. She has no alternative in finding a purpose in living other than early marriage, and no pattern for homemaking other than her own inadequate home life. A program of transitional education is suggested for the rural girl from the time she leaves school until she has her own home. The new form of education, important enough to merit the cooperation of the home, the school, the church, and other social agencies in the rural community, is a public obligation as much as a common school education, writes the author, as she presents the problem of the social adjustment of the girl in the rural family.

NIXON, H. C. *Possum Trot.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941, 192 pp. $2.50.

Possum Trot is a story of hills and hillfolk in a rural community in northeast Alabama, although it might well be a story of any community of the rural South and its relationship to the region, the nation, and to the world at large. The hillside slopes have been plowed and gullies are cut deep into the earth. Most of the farmers are cotton farmers. Common plagues are pellagra, malaria, and hookworm. Sharing in these attendant ills are large families characteristic of the area.

The first part of this small book contains the story of the mixed life of labor and play in Possum Trot during its early days and middle period "when Possum Trot and the world were not yet causing trouble to each other." This is a delightful picture of "the good old days" when life was so simple that the country store was able to supply nearly everything the people wished to buy.

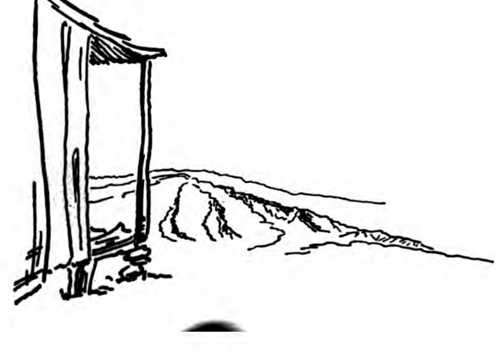
But evil days came upon Possum Trot. Farm tenancy, absentee landlords, the one-crop system, soil erosion, and farming on credit —all took their toll. The community experienced hard times, and many families moved away to work in city industries or to seek unspoiled farm lands.

Finally Mr. Nixon gives a picture of the possibilities of reconstruction of Possum Trot—more cattle, more poultry, more corn, the checking of soil erosion and the development of cooperatives to build a community refrigerator, a workshop, a community house, and a folk school. Inter-community councils will also be necessary to coordinate the life and labor of country neighborhoods, villages, and urban centers.

The author believes that the many Possum Trots scattered about the South and the nation can and should get to work to help themselves. They should place little faith in outside agencies which often collect, organize, and present information and then fail to do anything about it. "In its bargain with democratic destiny, the South must act." Mr. Nixon recognizes, however, that Possum Trots have few resources of their own and may often need governmental aid in training for and in changing to more varied types of farming and in helping to balance agriculture with the development of handicrafts and industry. Above all, the Possum Trots should have education for all ages and in all walks of life.

The situation is not without hope, explains the author, as he sets forth the possibilities of what *might* and *could* be done if all southern communities would utilize all their human and natural resources. The South can grow more food and eat it, provide more shelter and use it, produce more milk and drink it, create more beauty and see it. It can learn the advantages of dairying and mixed farming on a year-round basis. It can lessen its dependence upon cotton and devote more time to poultry, pigs, cattle, gardens, cover crops, soil conservation, and community welfare. It can inaugurate new activities—manufactures made possible by scientific research and available utilities. Emphasis is placed on what can and should make for ideal community relationship—closer ties with neighbors, cultural, political, and recreational ties conducive to more wholesome living, community-wide, region-wide, and nation-wide.

The greatness of this book lies in its down-to-earth description of the actual successes and failures of a real southern community—a community which seems typical of many, many others in the South.



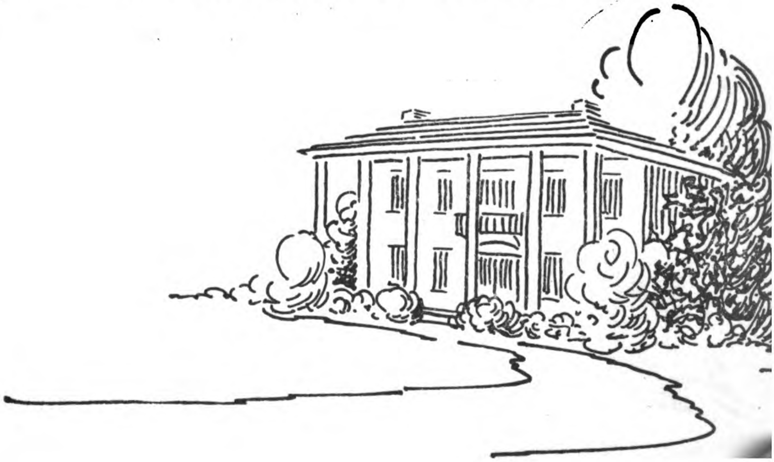
PERCY, WILLIAM ALEXANDER. *Lanterns on the Levee.* New York: Knopf, 1941, 348 pp. $3.00.

Lanterns on the Levee is a collection of haunting reminiscences, sometimes mellow and oftimes stinging, laid bare by a native son of the deep South. Autobiographical accounts of the writer's life and experiences cover dramatic incidents from glowing young childhood to quiet old age.

Mr. Percy opens his reflections with a picture of the Mississippi Delta Country, the river country which "lies flat, like a badly drawn oval, with Memphis at its northern and Vicksburg at its southern tip. Its western boundary is the Mississippi River. The soil, very dark brown, creamy and sweet-smelling . . . was built up slowly, century after century, by the sediment gathered by the river in its solemn task of cleansing the continent and deposited in annual layers of silt on what must once have been the vast depression between itself and the hills."

Sprinkling the section are the Delta folks, a hodge-podge of aristocrats, and "many very different children of God who took up their abode beside the waters of the great river"—Jews, Italians, Irish, Chinese, Syrians; all of whom have contributed to the Delta way of life. The three basic threads of Delta society are the landed gentry, the poor whites, and the Negroes.

Early childhood, recounts the author, was a happy period of thrice-blessed existence flavored by parental fondness, black mammy guardianship, and chocolate-colored companionship. Of unexcelled interest was the pastime of hunting for crawfish tails, which more times than a few caused the hapless victim to rear back on his haunches in an attitude of saying: ". . . white folks, I ain't got no tail!"



A product of formal training and education received through private tutorship, select colleges, and much foreign travel, the author found himself in early manhood engaged rather helplessly and somewhat briefly in a teaching career. Politics followed soon thereafter with some of its many problems—demagoguery, "timid and third-rate" legislation, "white supremacy," vote-buying and ballot-stuffing, chicanery, intimidation, and finally the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan.

While political problems were ever in evidence and noteworthy, other problems quite as numerous and paramount existed—the race problem, with its attendant ills of stealing, drinking, gambling, adultery, bigamy, cuttings, shootings, and lynchings; the Negro made a criminal by unfavorable economic conditions and social environment imposed upon him and for which he himself was not to blame. Always above the land and the people were the appalling specters of malaria, sharecropping, sectional hatred, soil erosion, and the eternal breaking of the levee.

Through all these problems the aristocratic native moves with patient tolerance toward the Negro *as a Negro,* but with little hope for the tragedy of a minority race in "an alien world." But for the "poor whites" he has little sympathy or respect. In his bitterness that "the bottom rail" was on top in Mississippi, he almost endorses the planters' belief that one aristocrat is worth a hundred "red necks." Similarly, he defends sharecropping as an excellent system marred only by the failures of human nature. In general his attitudes and opinions are characteristic of the planters who once greatly affected the life of the South but who are now rarely seen or heard—and certainly not likely to be heard in a book of such charm and beauty.

ROBERTSON, BEN. *Red Hills and Cotton.* New York: Knopf, 1942, 296 pp. $2.50.

Ben Robertson's family has for generations been a living part of the Upcountry of South Carolina. He was able, therefore, to give to his readers an outstanding chronicle of life in this region from pioneer days to the present time. When this book is read, the readers will agree with his grandmother that he was "first of all a Carolinian." However, when *I Saw England,* or some of his war dispatches, are read it will be seen that he was not only a "citizen of the United States" but of the world.

Speaking of his people, the author writes: "We are farmers, all Democrats and Baptists—a strange people, complicated and simple and proud and religious and family-loving, a divorceless, Bible-reading murdersome lot of folks, all of us rich in ancestry and steeped in tradition and emotionally quick on the trigger."

The South's dependence upon cotton is vividly portrayed—cotton at eight cents a pound or cotton at forty cents a pound. Even though it pays good dividends only about once every ten years and is so hard on the land that a big fertilizer bill is almost inevitable, the farmers still cling to cotton as a staple crop. "Our wagon was hitched to cotton's star, where it had been hitched for a hundred years and where it is still hitched." One reason for this loyalty is the simple fact that southerners like to raise cotton because it requires only about six months' work a year. During the other six months the farmer can enjoy the freedom that is so vital to the happiness of the inhabitants of the Carolina Piedmont. This desire for freedom by the hill country farmers is one of the central themes of the book and explains in part why the author's kin clung to their eroded farms and resisted opportunities to enter the disciplined work of mills and factories. Their general belief was that "the factory system smothered the individuality of life; it killed a man's inner glow."

The outstanding characteristics of the people are effectively portrayed. Through stories of his kinfolk, living or long dead, the author gives a moving and beautifully worded picture of one part of the rural South—its conservatism, clannishness, hospitality, individualism, neighborliness, slow tempo of life, emphasis upon one's character and honor, and loyalty to the past. These persons and incidents also reveal the great problems of the South—soil erosion, farm tenancy, evils of industrialization, and racial and class conflicts.

These farm folk did not live a drab, unhappy discontented existence. They were alive to the beauties all around them and they were not too hurried to take time out to enjoy the sunshine, the singing birds, and the rocking chair on the piazza. They delighted "in the rich, red soil, in the blueness of the lovely mountains, in the wild southern flowers, and in the high South sky."

Without formal argument *Red Hills and Cotton* presents by story and incident a strong case for an agrarian pattern of life with its intimate personal contacts, its kindliness and self-respect, its loyalty to family and place, its reverence for the mysteries of life, and its faith in a better world. The description of the soil, streams, climate, crops, animals, customs, forms of entertainment and recreation, and philosophy of life are exceedingly vivid. It is a book of gentle humor, of phantasy, of kindly understanding, of human weaknesses and eccentricities, yet it presents an overview of rural life in the South not often equalled.

THE LAND

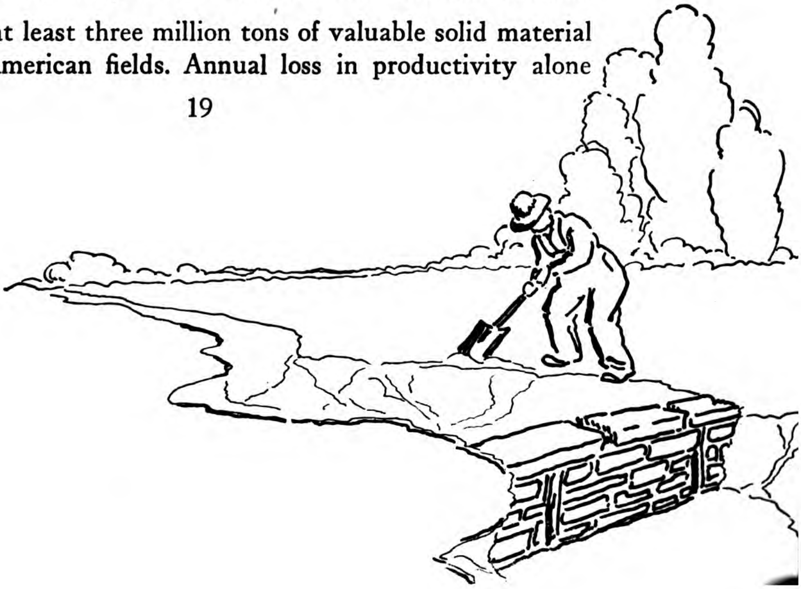
BENNETT, HUGH HAMMOND. *Soil Conservation.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1940, 993 pp. $6.00.

Mr. Bennett's *Soil Conservation* is a full, sweeping, and comprehensive treatment of the problem of soil erosion in the United States. The problem is discussed not only in its national aspects, but each physiographic region of the United States is analyzed for its general soil characteristics, the erosion that has taken place, and the conservation work that has been done.

Every record of man's destruction of soil resources indicates the disappearance of civilization from that area. Abandoned cities of ancient Mesopotamia are surrounded by wasted fields of blowing sand; the old splendor of Antioch is covered by twenty-eight feet of erosion debris; the ancient Greeks only sat and philosophized about the evils of agricultural practices which were washing away their soil.

America is not exempt from the fate of the Old World. Because the United States has so much land devoted to row crops and because much of it is subject to sudden rains, the land is even more susceptible than many other parts of the world. About 150 million of the 414 million acres of cropland in the United States are planted in clean-tilled crops that leave the soil exposed; in Europe, excluding Russia, only about 68 million acres of approximately the same area of cropland is in row crops. This means that the United States in comparison with Europe, exposes two and a half times as many acres to serious wind and rain erosion.

Every year at least three million tons of valuable solid material wash out of American fields. Annual loss in productivity alone



amounts to at least $400,000,000. This does not include property losses through floods, rich fields ruined by sedimentation, clogged navigation channels, ruined reservoirs, lost power developments, and irrigation projects. When, however, soil is recognized as the irreplaceable resource that it is, the real erosion loss is beyond computation.

The responsibility for a national program of soil defense falls upon both the *nation and the individual.* An intelligent public understanding of the priceless value of our natural resources is vital. "National action may be led and aided by government, but the soil must be conserved ultimately by those individuals who till the land and live by its products."

Crop rotation is important first for saving the soil; in addition it maintains, yields, and retains soil nitrogen and organic matter. Strip-cropping, vegetable waterways, and the use of crop residues are valuable practices in soil and water conservation. Forest plantings and forest upkeep may in time remove fully the scars of erosion, check excessive runoff, and encourage the return of wild life. Field and pasture contouring, terracing, artificial channels, small dams, stream-bank protection, and water-spreading principles are explained, and their importance in soil conservation emphasized.

In spite of the seriousness of the problem, Mr. Bennett sees the future with optimism. In farming and grazing regions, 280 million acres of land have already been ruined; erosion is active at present on another 775 million acres. The question is not whether we can cope with the problem; "*We know we can.*" New conservation measures are continually being developed and taught. What is necessary as well, is the application of the principle for which America has become famous—*speed!*

CHASE, STUART. *Rich Land, Poor Land.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936, 391 pp. $2.50.

In *Rich Land, Poor Land,* with a swift, running commentary of humor, personal interpolations, slang, and a bold presentation of facts, Stuart Chase lays before us a picture of our human heritage laid waste in the hands of its exploiters. His challenging comments, striking at the heart of one of our most disheartening problems, may be summed up in his remark: "The people of America have been sitting on their porches watching their continent go by."

Perhaps the most serious loss is that of our land, for a fertile soil is fundamental in a highly developed civilization. Few of us realize that half of the original fertility of our continent, as a whole, has been dissipated through the various agencies of loss. Every year approximately 400 million tons of soil are dumped into the Gulf of Mexico by the Mississippi River alone—and the greater part of this loss is of super soil richer than that of the Nile. Soil depletion due to cropping is the result of unwise market practices, revolving around a one-crop system; losses due to erosion are the result of stripping the forests and the grass cover from the land. Soil worn lean by cropping can be restored with plant food, but once the water has taken away the soil itself—including minerals, humus, organisms, rock particles—only nature and a long period of time can restore the fertility. Below the surface are additional resources rapidly being devoured.

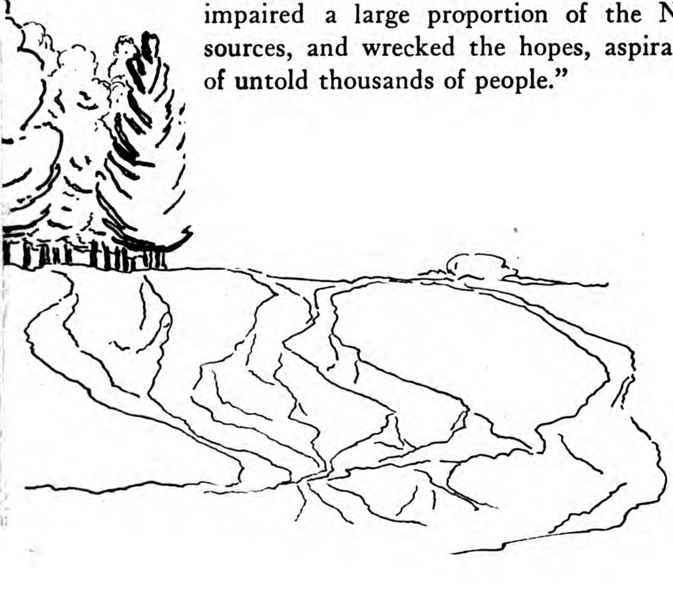
If the southern people are to achieve a higher level of living for themselves and contribute to the welfare of the nation as a whole, systematic education and systematic attack on the problems of soil erosion and depletion of other natural resources are imperative.

Lord, Russell. *Behold Our Land.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938, 310 pp. $3.00.

If we continue to neglect soil erosion we shall have increasingly difficult problems of human adjustment. According to the estimates of Hugh Bennett, the dust storms of 1934 carried off 300,000,000 tons of soil—enough to cover one million acres to a depth of one and a half inches. More dangerous than wind erosion is water erosion, both by gullying and by sheet washing. Five hundred to one thousand years are required to lay down one inch of rich topsoil. On slopes plowed and cultivated regularly an inch of this soil may be washed out every eleven years, or even in a single year, and on an exposed slope one heavy downpour can carry off the accumulation of a thousand years.

It may be thought that the loss of topsoil is not important in a country where we have had to restrict agricultural production. But it is almost a truism to say that a poor soil makes a poor people. When men through carelessness or ignorance lose the fertility of their soil, their civilization weakens. When the soil is gone, not only the farmers suffer, but the whole nation is affected.

Soil destruction is not the result of malicious selfishness but is an almost inevitable consequence of our social and economic systems. Individuals, soil conservation districts, states, and the federal government must all cooperate to preserve the soil. As Mr. Lord points out, we have a sadly diminished area of productive crop land; and, according to the National Resources Board, "a planless, crazy-quilt pattern of land use which has destroyed or impaired a large proportion of the Nation's irreplaceable resources, and wrecked the hopes, aspirations, and the very lives of untold thousands of people."



PARKINS, A. E. and WHITAKER, J. R. *Our Natural Resources and Their Conservation.* John Wiley & Sons, 1939, $4.00.

This book is a symposium by twenty-three experts covering the whole range of our natural resources. In addition there are contributions from specialized fields, such as engineering and geology, and some technical treatment of conservation problems.

The first resource treated is land. A much-needed program of action is a broad inventory of the lands of the United States which will include soil characteristics, the combinations of environmental elements, uses to which each type could best be put, and a long-range plan for moving each class into its optimum practical use and management.

Closely related to soil conservation is the development of "tree crops." There is every reason to believe that, by systematic searching and plant breeding, we could develop new crops and almost a new agricultural system. The mountains of Corsica are devoted to a chestnut culture that has held the soil intact on slopes as steep as the roof of a house—and at the same time, with small vegetable gardens, goats and pigs, has provided the villagers with an adequate and permanent agriculture. With the cost that is required to build, maintain, and operate one battleship, America could "soon transform millions of acres of hillsides from gullied ruins, poor pastures, and poor forests into first-class croplands, yielding grass and also honey locust beans for stock food and sugar; persimmons and mulberries for stock food; acorns and chestnuts for stock food, commercial starch, and bread. . . ."

Hillsides are not the only lands in need of attention. Impoverishment and even destruction of much of the original great re-

sources of our arid and semi-arid lands has resulted from severe overgrazing and plowing of unsuitable areas—both of which have destroyed the natural grass cover and left the soil bare to wind erosion.

The importance of conservation of our mineral treasures cannot be over-emphasized. "Minerals differ from the other great groups of resources in that they are not only exhaustible but are also non-reproducible. Worn-out soils may be rejuvenated, forests regrown, reservoirs refilled by rains; only in the mineral world does nature rarely replace." Perhaps the most serious enemy to conservation in the metal-mining industries is the competitive system. It brings about periodic overproduction, encourages waste, and causes great fluctuation in prices.

The "conservation of man" is as important as the conservation of all our other resources. Our human resources, the greatest of the nation's assets, have been neglected in many ways. The areas with the highest birth rates are the very regions with the poorest conditions of health, education, social betterment, and general developmental opportunities. "For their own sake, if for no other reason, it would seem as if the cities ought to show far more interest in improving the rural and less-favored regions from which they draw so much of their human material."

Because all of our natural resources are part of one great interlocking system, no one can be touched without affecting the others. Therefore, to achieve conservation of both natural and human resources, we must provide the machinery for regional planning which will make possible a long-term national development, improved facilities for living, both for today and in the future, and a stable resource-use economy.

THE COMMUNITY

Brunner, Edmund deS. *Community Organization and Adult Education.* University of North Carolina Press, 1942, $2.00.

This book is the story of a five-year experimental program developed in Greenville County, South Carolina. It describes the county-wide experiment in community organization which was begun in 1936 and ended in 1941.

The Council began with a few interested individuals and was broadened as the need and interest grew. By the middle of the second year, the Council was pursuing five major approaches to community development—assistance to existing organizations and leaders, organization of new agencies, education of college students, organization of community councils, and social planning and action by special committees. Mr. Brunner describes in detail how these approaches functioned.

Realizing that few people could think in terms of the whole county, the County Council thought it would be well to try some local community councils. Eight such councils were organized. The author describes some of their activities and indicates, in comparing the poorer attempts with the more successful, that local leadership and local support are essential. Some achievements in one of the successful communities include a cooperative store, a community potato curing house, a cooperative cannery, a credit union, and a beautification program.

In a chapter of conclusions, Mr. Brunner sets down some observations on the Council's experience which he believes might be of value in the general field of community organization. For the failure of the Council to continue after the five-year period, he suggests several possible contributing reasons.

Cook, Lloyd Allen. *Community Backgrounds of Education.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1938, 397 pp. $3.00.

This book deals primarily with a single aspect of educational sociology—the field of school and community relationship. What is education? When does education begin for the child and when does it end? Why did society organize schools? These are some of the thought-provoking questions raised by the author in his exploratory approach to a sociological understanding of self-perpetuating problems in community areas of living.

That education and social change should go forward simultaneously is evidenced by Dr. Cook when he writes that there is a kind of education toward which we should move which is not easy to define. ". . . in essence, it would seem to be a matter of pupil growth under planning, a thoughtful effort to assimilate a growing person to a changing community."

A distinction between education as the transmission of a heritage and as social guidance is exemplified in the partial account of the "Shady Grove" teacher whose educational philosophy was that her school should *serve* the community and its needs as its primary function; and that it should be dynamic, not static, in coping with forces underlying constant change. Insight into the community idea is revealed by descriptions of representative areas, each with problems peculiar to its significant setting.

A variety of problems centering around the teacher and the school child is presented for consideration. The teacher's out-of-school life, school control and teacher freedom, progressive education, educating for social adjustment, and the needs in teacher-training are final phases of this sweeping study of school and community interaction.

FOWLER, BERTRAM B. *The Lord Helps Those.* New York: Vanguard Press, 1938, 180 pp. $1.75.

The 1920's found the village of Little Dover in Nova Scotia perched on a barren shore; its boats rotting on the coast; its wharves tumbling; and its people losing in their cruel struggle against "the elements of a hungry sea and a hungrier system of rapacious greed." This was before these fishermen had ever heard of Dr. J. J. Tompkins.

In 1923 Dr. Tompkins went as priest to the parish of Canso, a fishing town on the east shore. He visited and talked in the homes of the people; he spoke with groups in the woods and on boats; he circulated pamphlets and clippings; he read aloud from books to those who could not read; and he made the men see why dealers paid them fifty cents a hundredweight for deep-seafish that cost the consumers twenty or more cents a pound.

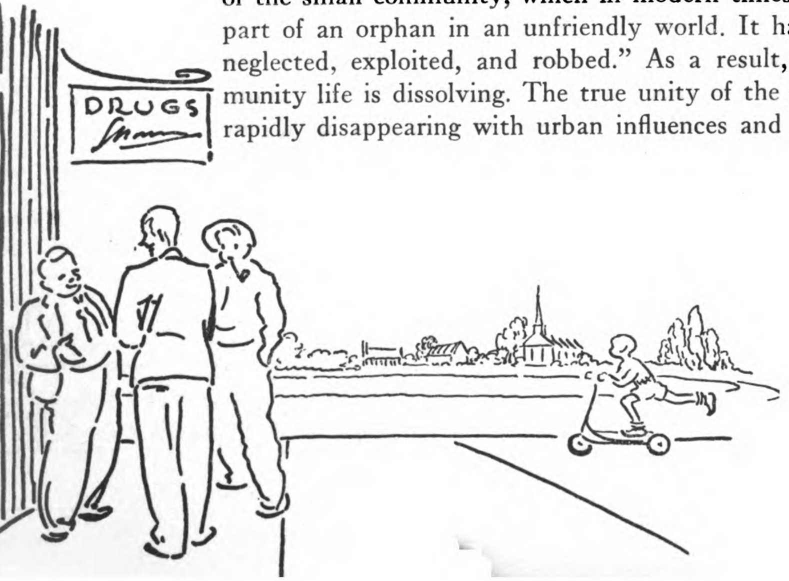
When the people of Little Dover began to think for themselves, they were ready to work out a program of action. The first thing they did was to set up a lobster factory. They had to borrow $1,000 to buy machinery, but by the end of the first lobster season, they had enough money to pay back the $1,000 and return two cents a pound to every fisherman. This was only the first concrete victory for the study clubs. Next they found a way to obtain milch goats; they formed buying clubs and built new fishing boats cooperatively; they built a new school building. This new vision of a balanced economic system has replaced the abandoned farms, mining hovels, and rotting fishing gear in Nova Scotia with new homes, flocks of sheep, cooperative canneries, marketing clubs, regional libraries, credit unions, factories, and most of all, a new light of intelligence and hope in the minds and hearts of its people.

Morgan, Arthur E. *The Small Community*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1942, 312 pp. $1.50.

Mr. Morgan's book is a testament of faith in the small community. His great belief in the small community as the "seed bed of some of the finest qualities of civilization" is evident in the section of his writing devoted to its significance in society. Art, business, science, and government are not the basic factors in civilization, he says, but rather its fruits. The roots of civilization are its qualities of courage, neighborliness, inquiry, and patience. These qualities are not innate; they must be learned. And it is only in the primary group, in the intimacy of the family and the small community, that they are supported and transmitted. Fallen civilizations have always rebuilt from the village level. Furthermore, small group life is the source of population. Large city populations do not reproduce themselves, and would eventually almost disappear if they were not constantly replenished from the small communities.

The community is strong first of all because "man is a communal animal." Its fine human relations give it a "toughness" that will withstand outside disintegrating influences. It strengthens the family, which has often been called the essential institution of any society. Finally, it provides individuals the opportunity to deal with problems within their grasp.

It is time that America recognizes this fundamental significance of the small community, which in modern times "has played the part of an orphan in an unfriendly world. It has been despised, neglected, exploited, and robbed." As a result, integrated community life is dissolving. The true unity of the pioneer village is rapidly disappearing with urban influences and the development



of unity around specialized narrow interests, such as the labor union, farm organization, chamber of commerce, or the church. The problem, then, is to create "a new synthesis of small-community life."

Community organization and planning has this for its aim. The first step in such community development is an intensive study. This will serve not only to make clear the needs of the community, but it will also lead the people to become more conscious of their community as such, and of its possibilities. The next step might be the development of a community council. Mr. Morgan considers this undertaking so important that he has included a chapter on its formation, which contains valuable suggestions for interested community leaders.

Separate chapters on several specific community interests are included. One of these is government and public relations, as "one of the chief problems of any community is a wholesome political tradition." Another is economics. Helpful to the development of a satisfying economic life in our complex economic organization is the use of cooperatives. These are usually soundest when they grow slowly from an informal cooperative spirit in the community. Another interest with which any intelligent community will concern itself is health. Social services are important, and relief or welfare cases may be handled with a neighborly friendliness in the small community not possible in larger areas. Provision for recreation is a community responsibility which is too often completely neglected. Improvements may be made also in the church life, which many times is the cause of bitter disagreements. Finally, the community must develop a common standard for ethical conduct which will remove violent group prejudices and promote desirable unity.

Powdermaker, Hortense. *After Freedom.* New York: Viking Press, 1939, 408 pp. $3.00.

In this book an anthropologist studies the relationship between southern Negroes and whites and the survival of African culture and character in "Cottonville," a typical community in Mississippi. The author writes from the point of view of a fact finder. Negro family life, religion and superstition, education, and class lines are a few of the subjects described honestly and accurately.

In opposition to Negro and middle and upper classes of whites is the poor white tenant, who lives chiefly on small farms as a renter or sharecropper. This class has the advantage over the Negro by having the voting privilege and independent spirit. His feelings for the Negro are made known by an occasional lynching, which the upper class white considers "bad," but privately condones. The Negro competes for work with the poor whites, and the planter prefers Negro labor because he can exercise control over him more easily.

The author gives an excellent description of "getting religion." Since education has apparently done much to loosen the hold of a religion of fear on the young, the Negro preacher has lost some of his prestige. Much ground has been covered "since freedom came." Land ownership is no longer an exclusively white pattern. Education holds glamour and prestige for Negroes in Mississippi. It has become a symbol of escape from illiteracy, labor, poverty, and social disadvantages. Many whites are convinced that the Negro needs education and that it will not take him out of "his place" but will make him a better citizen. Fears and doubts are still in force, however, and few believe that education will solve the race problem.

TERPENNING, WALTER A. *Village and Open-Country Neighborhoods*. New York: Century, 1941, 495 pp. $4.00.

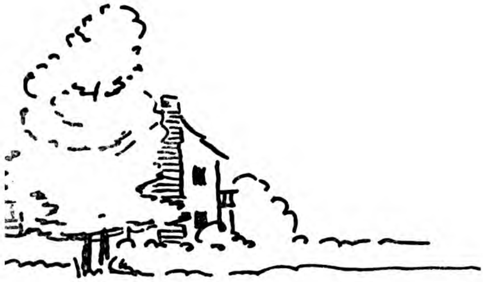
This book is a comparison of the satisfaction of rural life in open-country neighborhoods with that enjoyed in village neighborhoods. American farmers living isolated, each on his own plot, miss that richness of communal life and the necessary process of socialization which one receives in group living. Mr. Terpenning has attempted to compare the advantages or disadvantages in each of the two forms of neighborhoods. From an intimate and first-hand study of village life in eight Old World countries, he has tried to "discover what characteristics of the advantageous characteristics are attainable in American rural life."

The American neighborhood is presented first in what Mr. Terpenning has called a "life study method," combining both statistical investigation and sympathetic observation to give a living analysis. The land-hungriness of colonists, the homestead laws, and the distribution of land holdings by railroads were all factors unfavorable to the establishment of unified neighborhoods in America. In a study of two communities, the author clearly demonstrates the "rampant individualism of the American open-country neighborhood with the resultant wastefulness, futility, and disorganization."

One of the most amazing pictures of rural life given is that of the Swiss commune. In Russin, the village described, every home has electricity and running water in the barns as well as in the dwellings. The school is well equipped and regarded with pride. There is a splendid recreational program. Every villager carefully cleans the street in front of his property, including the washing of the paved courtyards. Thus, says Mr. Terpenning, "Russin in her play, worship, business, and all other activities, lives a cooperative life. Her people have all the virtues of the Swiss, but the most outstanding quality observed was that neighborhood product, *cooperative character.*"

The English parish, he found, while stronger internally than the American neighborhood, lacks that happy nature of the Swiss village, and often suffers from conflict in social classification. Life in a German dorf is described as thrifty, clean, quiet, sociable, and respectable. The French and Italian villages, on first look, appear somewhat dingy and dirty, although in the case of the French this is more apparent than real. The French peasants are very frugal, although, we learn they "could give American farmers lessons on the subject of how to have a good time." The study of Ireland, too, indicates the vital importance of the primary group and neighborhood in the social life of a people. Life in a Danish village compares favorably with the Swiss in its efficiency, beauty, and spirit of cooperation. The Russian village is somewhat changed by the Soviet program, although the old tribal traditions of the Russian *mir* probably have been less disturbed than in any other European nation.

Mr. Terpenning concludes that village life develops a social, economic, and political strength from unity not found in open-country neighborhoods. To move American farm homes wholesale is impossible. But to overcome the anti-social folkways and mores produced through isolation is *not* impossible. With modern transportation facilities, dwellers in scattered homes can nevertheless achieve a satisfying neighborhood life—if they are willing to work toward a conscious organization which will educate for economic cooperation, improved recreational facilities, and build itself upon "the rock of neighborliness."



FARMING AND THE FARMER

Deering, Ferdie. *USDA Manager of American Agriculture.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945, 213 pp. $2.50.

USDA is the abbreviation of United States Department of Agriculture, the world's largest spending department, excepting only War and Navy, and at the same time the one with the largest peace-time job on its hands.

Most of us think of the department as being concerned mostly with the breeding and improving of new plants, but Deering shows that, as it is organized at present, it is divided into at least fifty odd bureaus and agencies, the larger of which employ more than 10,000 workers each; and that there is scarcely a phase of farm life which is not dealt with in one way or another by some one of these agencies or bureaus.

In fact, this organization is such a giant that for the last ten years it has averaged spending more than a billion dollars a year, in various loans, gifts, and subsidies. It employs, altogether, an average of one full-time worker for every 75 farms in the United States, and there are few phases of American farm life which it does not control at least in part.

The author shows that most functions are carried on by at least five or six different agencies that duplicate each other's work without rule or reason. Consequently he urges a complete reorganization of the department to save millions of dollars a year and to enable it to do much better work.

The book is interestingly written, very informative, and should be read by all agriculturists, politicians, editors, and community leaders.

Eaton, Joseph W. *Exploring Tomorrow's Agriculture.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1943, 255 pp. $2.75.

Exploring Tomorrow's Agriculture attacks the problem of how farmers can secure an adequate income, a stimulating type of work, and a pleasant community and home life. The book "is a study of the cooperative group farm—an association of a number of farm families who operate jointly a large-scale farming enterprise and who equitably share the returns of their group effort."

It is true that several causes of farm problems are a part of larger social maladjustments. Nevertheless, there are many internal difficulties in agriculture which may be attacked without waiting for solutions to these basic problems. Three primary obstacles to rural rehabilitation are: (1) asocial effects of mechanization; (2) inefficient farm production; and (3) habits of rugged isolation.

The cooperative farm is only one means of rural rehabilitation. The large-scale cooperative farms involve a fundamental change in our agricultural system. Their establishment is a challenge to the family-farm pattern. The philosophy of large-scale farming is "reflected in the Farm Security Agency definition of cooperation farming as 'simply large-scale farming, with the profits, if any, going to the members of the cooperative association in proportion to their labor rather than to private proprietors.' "

The most important aspect of the cooperative farm is its cooperative philosophy and its emphasis on community integration. The chance for spare time, the feeling of being a part of a group, the opportunity for political expression, and social status give the members a better possibility for living "the good life."

GEE, WILSON. *The Social Economics of Agriculture.* New York: Macmillan, 1942, 720 pp. $4.00.

In this book the author competently carries out his stated purpose to "view the agricultural problems not simply as an economic, sociological, historical, or governmental one, but in the combined perspective of all these approaches."

A picture of old world agriculture is first presented, then its transplanting to this country, and finally a history of its development up to and including New Deal farm relief measures. The economics of agriculture is given a treatment from many standpoints, from farm management to cooperative marketing, together with a liberal sprinkling of the problems of wages, labor, finance, management, tenancy, and even farm insurance.

Excellent treatment is given to such topics as the farmer and his church, the surroundings of rural people, the farmer's standard of living, population trends, the country schools, and the great problem of health. The recently developed business of public welfare is discussed in relation to rural people. How well the author discusses these several social factors is illustrated when, in describing the farmer's standard of living, he writes, "There is tragedy, pathos, ingenuity, and heroism in the situation met by these low-income families. Thirty-one dollars annually to clothe an entire family."

Mr. Gee presents a picture of agriculture when our government was founded, and how industry and business gradually rooted the farmer away from governmental control. He shows the conflict between the farmer and tariff; how the farmer has been "sugar-teated" into working for tariff for protection by including some agricultural commodities.

McWILLIAMS, CAREY. *Ill Fares the Land. Boston:* Little, Brown & Co., 1942, 419 pp. $3.00.

This fully documented account of migratory labor in American agriculture emphasizes forcibly the fact that an industrial revolution has hit the farmer. The sentimental American notion of "farming as a way of life" is a myth. The small farmer is disappearing. It is obvious just how much chance a dirt farmer with fifty acres has in competition with vast "farm factories" that control the market.

Displaced farmers comprise one group of migrants that have been set adrift on the land. There is another group—that of regular migratory workers who for years have been following a set route. Both of these groups, however, are "victims of the industrial revolution in agriculture." Because migrants are not a part of the community, entrepreneurs feel no responsibility for their welfare.

It has been shown that a large surplus of workers is purposely sought so that the wage scale will be low. Thus, many times laborers travel long distances under deplorable conditions and still fail to get work. Those who do, often labor twelve hours a day for several weeks and then find themselves stranded penniless after deductions for transportation, food, supplies, and advances in pay.

Technological inventions have accelerated alarmingly the process of displacement that is the result of finance capitalism in agriculture. All of this means not only increased poverty, but also a decrease in the stability of the farm population and a correspondingly increased waste of land. It is time for Americans to change their traditional concept of land as a commodity to be traded and regard it as a public resource with its use subject to social control.

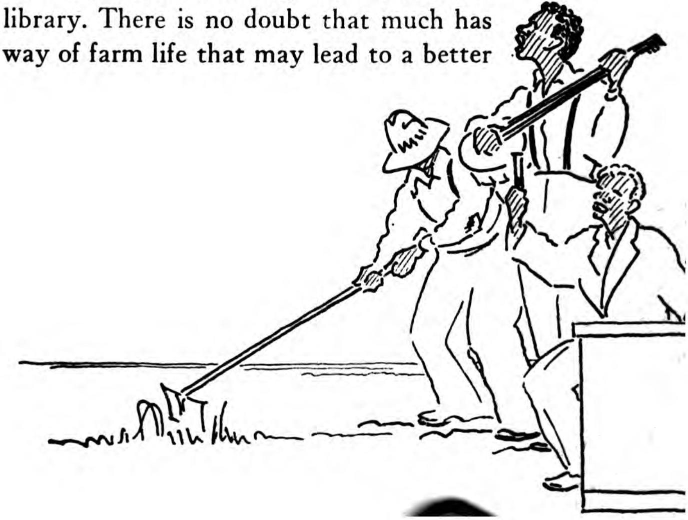
Raper, Arthur Franklin. *Tenants of the Almighty.* New York: Macmillan, 1943, 403 pp. $3.00.

Tenants of the Almighty is the history of one-crop tenant-inhabited Greene County, Georgia. Almost half of the book deals with the work sponsored by governmental agencies toward solving the county's farm problems since 1938.

The first white men in Greene County lived simply and met their own needs at home. However, as the county grew, slave and landholdings of large planters increased until many of the family-size farms were swallowed up. The war years of the 1860's left the Negroes free but landless, and the white planters possessed nothing but the land.

Farming was begun again in Greene County on borrowed money, with the Negroes first as wage hands, and later as tenants. There developed at the very top of the scale a time-merchant prosperity through thriving credit business. Then came World War I and high prices again for cotton. But the boll weevil came too, and by 1922 fewer than 350 bales of cotton were harvested in Greene County. Everyone was in debt, much of the land lay idle, and thousands of people left the county.

The old order was passing in Greene County. Early in 1939 the U. S. Department of Agriculture decided to use the county as a demonstration area in which all governmental agencies would cooperate under a Unified Farm Program. Land improvement was begun immediately. Improvements in education followed—hot lunches in the schools, new vocational buildings and vocational teachers, and a county library. There is no doubt that much has been done to indicate a way of farm life that may lead to a better rural economy.

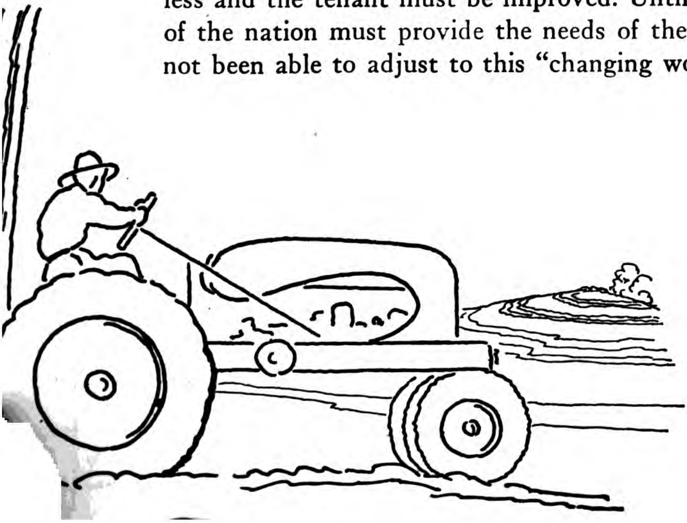


United States Department of Agriculture. *Farmers in a Changing World.* Washington, 1940 Yearbook, 1215 pp. $1.50.

This book of fifty-four articles gives an insight into the development of agriculture. It includes a history of the changes that took place during the 300 years from the colonial period through 1939, with special emphasis upon problem changes and their effect upon national policies. According to Johnstone, farmers' problems would be simple if there were no change—"no change in soils, culture, practices, markets, population, birth rates, and a thousand other things," but there are constantly emerging new ideas, practices, and problems.

There are seven divisions of the book: (1) The history of agriculture, (2) the relationship between agriculture and national welfare, (3) the current problems today and efforts to solve them, (4) a factual report of the growth and policies of three great national farm organizations, (5) the farmer's life as seen through the eyes of an anthropologist, a sociologist, and a philosopher, (6) the relationship of policy-making to democratic process, and (7) an attempt to sum up what has gone before in terms of today's and tomorrow's policies.

We see the farmer "moved all the way from the sickle to the combine, from the wooden plow drawn by a yoke of oxen to the gang plow powered by a tractor." We find the farmer bewildered when he realizes there is not enough land to go around. Not just one phase of his life has been touched, but all his life. The farmer must have help in adjusting to this change. The lot of the wageless and the tenant must be improved. Until that day the people of the nation must provide the needs of these farmers who have not been able to adjust to this "changing world."



The picture clears as one follows the author when he says, "The ear today is much closer to the ground to hear the tramp of entrenched privilege than it was when our national leaders were farmers, their living assured, and their financial success conditioned upon the whims or animosities of no man or group of men."

Galpin's challenging thought on a new type of rural governmental unit, composed of a town and surrounding rural trade area, is described. This gives new possibilities for towns to become the "specialized service station for the larger community." A "service center" of this kind would be an important factor in crystallizing a disorganized community into an integrated whole.

Amelioration of the farm-tenancy situation will come, according to the author, when certain factors necessary for the translation of tenant farmers into landowners are present—tenant education with the instillation of ideals of ownership, improvement of landlord-tenant relationship, national and state policies discouraging tenancy and encouraging ownership, and profitable agriculture.

This book is comprehensive enough to serve the average person but does not overburden one with statistics. It is more readable than the average textbook, as can be seen from such statements as that of the townman's life which "may well be described as bifocal, the two centers are home and the downtown store or office." Or when he pleads for family life in the country: "The crowded tenement house should be abandoned for the cottage in the suburban area, town or smaller village where the smoke and stench of man-made industries may be dissolved in the vast purifying air spaces and the sunlight of God's great open spaces, and the urban family find more wholesome conditions for expression."

WARING, P. ALSTON and TELLER, WALTER MAGNES. *Roots in the Earth.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1944, 202 pp. $2.50.

The authors of *Roots in the Earth* are both small farmers. They have written about the problems and the future of small farmers as men who know from experience. These men definitely feel, unlike some others, that there is a place in our economic system for the family-size farm. It is true that the small farmer alone has little bargaining power on the market against mechanized agriculture. But the question is raised: "Need he be alone?" The day for so-called rugged individualism is past; any farmer who insists on living by this pattern is doomed.

For the establishment of a permanent agriculture, the nation—not just farmers alone—must first realize that one "can't escape into farming." There must be developed new attitudes toward land use, land ownership, and land acquisition. There must be more "farming for the family," with a balance between production for cash and production for home consumption. There must come the realization that the small farm can be run efficiently, for efficiency is not limited to large-scale production. And most important of all, conservation must come to be regarded as the basis of a method of farming for sustained yields rather than exploitation of the future for immediate returns. And for all of these changes to be effective, there is one further important step—increased cooperation.

Finally, if we are to have a better agriculture, we must have better rural education. Urbanized education in rural areas has weakened and infected all agriculture. Only with changed attitudes will there be a chance for "new men on the land," men who know how to work with their fellowmen, and how to cope with their world.

SPECIAL GROUPS

EMBREE, EDWIN R. *American Negroes.* New York: John Day Co., 1942, 78 pp. $1.00.

Contrary to popular opinion, the American Negro is descended from many and diverse African peoples and cultures, some of them of a high degree of development. Continual racial intermixture in the New World, both with whites and Indians, has produced a group with about 80 per cent of some degree of non-African parentage. In 1790 Negroes made up nearly 20 per cent of the population but now comprise less than 10 per cent, partly because of a death rate even now almost one-third higher than that for the whites.

In 1865 about 95 per cent of Negroes were illiterate. Yet by 1936 nearly two and one half million Negro students were enrolled in southern public schools in spite of a per pupil expenditure of only a little more than one-third of that for white pupils. In the nation over 100 colleges are devoted to the higher education of Negroes, and about 40,000 have received college degrees.

While farming and domestic service still account for over one-half of Negro wage earners, employment in industries has increased rapidly in recent years, especially in the heavy industries located in northern cities. Greater incomes and more education have also resulted in rapid growth of middle and upper class groups. In 1940 Negroes were estimated to own real property valued at about two and one half billion dollars.

Negroes are constantly making greater contributions to American life. This little handbook gives the minimum essentials of what everyone should know about Negroes, who make up such a large proportion of the rural population of the South.

HAGOOD, MARGARET JARMAN. *Mothers of the South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939, 252 pp. $2.00.

Mothers of the South is a combination of a very human account and a scientific survey of white tenant farm mothers, who are presented by the author in their tasks of field work, housekeeping, childbearing, child "raising," wifehood, and community participation—with introductory chapters on types of farms and farming and a concluding section on meanings and interpretation.

"On such farms, so financed, so sparing in economic returns, these mothers labor. A considerable amount of the field work is not only a modal pattern but is the practice in over three-fourths of the cases. The rule is to do as nearly full-time work as housekeeping and cooking permits during chopping, hoeing, and picking times on the cotton farm, or during most of the summer on the tobacco farm, with fall spent largely in the striphouse."

The attitude of these mothers regarding the bearing of children is not only one of despair, but displays the lack of knowledge in this area of life. "The traditional pattern of the glory and the actual or imagined value of a large number of children pull in one direction, while the desire to avoid suffering of childbearing, the trouble of caring for another child, and the responsibility of another mouth to be fed and body to be clothed pull in the other."

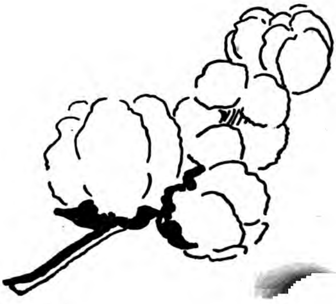
The matter of large families is discussed at length. The author feels that it is "socially undesirable for strictly sociological reasons" for this group of people to have the highest productivity rate in the country. The reading is interesting because the conversations between each mother and the author have human interest sought after and understood by people the world over.

Johnson, Charles. S. *A Preface to Racial Understanding.* New York: Friendship Press, 1936, 206 pp. $1.00.

This brief volume gives the story of the American Negro from his backgrounds among the diverse cultures and peoples of Africa down to his contemporary contributions to American life. Throughout the book the emphasis is upon human relationships involved rather than upon so-called racial problems.

Many factors contribute to the race relations now existing between the white man and the Negro, among which are the lack of equal educational and economic opportunities. In the early history of our country, during the days of slavery, the Negro was forbidden an education by law, and it was not until 1861 that a school was established for freedmen—a school in which a Negro woman was the teacher. Although the Negro is now given "equal rights" to education, he is not given equal opportunities. The progress of the Negro race and its resultant contributions to American civilization are remarkable in the face of almost unsurmountable difficulties. The first contribution was the gift of labor; from this there developed a surprising number of skilled artisans and some very valuable inventions. The most widely recognized contribution is their music, particularly the spirituals, which show so definitely the faith of the oppressed Negro. Other less familiar contributions have been made in literature and in art. Education has come in for its share of contributors.

The author, a distinguished Negro sociologist, presents an unbiased picture of race relations and gives an optimistic outlook for minimizing the present inequalities suffered by the Negro. He states, "The fact that human nature is plastic and responds to social change is the one great hope which inspires the step-by-step progress of race relations."



McIlwaine, Shields. *The Southern Poor-White from Lubberland to Tobacco Road.* University of Oklahoma Press, $2.50.

The Southern Poor-White from Lubberland to Tobacco Road is a social history of the southern poor-white as he appears in literature from the time of William Byrd to Erskine Caldwell. In this volume, the author presents a composite picture of these people—as they have emerged and developed in two centuries of literary portraiture, set off against a background of social facts.

The first literary treatment of the poor-white given by William Byrd, portrayed these people as "a group of runaways from Virginia, lazy, irreligious, filthy, and diseased." Ante-bellum southern literature introduced the lubber as a poor white "variously dubbed Cracker, woolhat, dirt-eater, or tacky." Plantation writers, as benefiting aristocracy, usually ignored the poor-white. The northern writers, however, made the poor-white their second line of attack on slavery, popularizing the tradition of their depravity.

The tendency in literature following the Civil War was one of glorifying the Old South, which included the poor-white. Stories of Joel Chandler Harris and Thomas Nelson Page give "a more appealing, sentimental portraiture, without the bitterness or contempt hitherto found either in northern or southern literature."

The second literary revival in the South, that of the twentieth century, brought the methods of critical realism and naturalism to the ever-increased writings about the poor-white, describing his degeneracy and tragedy in his present way of life. The increasing frankness and preoccupation with social degeneration, culminating in the naturalistic writings of William Faulkner and Erskine Caldwell, would seem to have exhausted the literary possibilities of the southern poor-white as he now exists.

EATON, ALLEN H. *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 370 pp. $3.50.

Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands is broader than its title. In spirit, it considers the place of handicrafts in our culture—as a source of income in certain mountain rural communities, but also as a means of creative expression, a tool in adult education, an absorbing hobby, a refuge for nerves harried by pressures of modern life. Such suggestions for the broader use of handicrafts grow out of a thorough, careful consideration of their recent revival in the Southern Highlands to which the text of the book is chiefly devoted. "This revealing book brings out not only the present-day facts of design, production, and distribution, but gives the background out of which the very extensive practice of handwork has come."

Mr. Eaton writes out of long experience among the mountain people and among handicrafts "which adorn as well as nourish . . . daily living." He accepts neither extreme—that the machine has made handicrafts wholly obsolete, or that anyone can do handwork and find a market. His book examines facts such as the extent and kinds of handicrafts which have developed successfully in the Southern Highlands, how the work is done, who does it, and how they feel about it, what markets exist and how they might be improved, what rewards other than money come to the handicraft worker.

This beautifully illustrated volume is a social study illumined by art. It will be of special value, we believe, to people in the Highlands; to students; to handicraft workers everywhere; to connoisseurs of American art and collectors of handicrafts; to teachers and leaders in adult education, recreation, and special crafts.

SHERMAN, MANDEL and HENRY, THOMAS R. *Hollow Folk.* New York: Crowell, 1933, 215 pp. $2.00.

Hollow Folk is a study of five communities in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The five groups described are interesting for the differences in culture between them which vary in proportion to the amount the community is isolated.

Less than one hundred miles from the nation's capital, virtually cut off from the rest of American life, is Colvin Hollow, the most isolated of the communities studied. No one there can read or write. The total livestock for the whole community consists of one pig and one horse. Described next in order are the settlements of Needle Hollow, Oakton Hollow, Rigby Hollow, and Briarsville which has the highest level in the degree of social organization—a small farm and sawmill town with a progressive school, regular church services, automobiles, and a knowledge of national affairs.

The degrees of difference between these communities are an interesting example of the effects of isolation. Having no knowledge of the conditions of others, the people of Colvin Hollow felt no incentive to change their own way of life. The destruction of game and loss of the tan-bark market forced the people back to an even lower and cruder form of existence. The people of Colvin Hollow have no crop surpluses, and in the winter the children no doubt suffer from hunger. The farms of Oakton and Rigby Hollow, however, produce a surplus which makes possible a variety of foods.

One beauty of the remote mountain life is indicated. "Worry, sometimes described as the crowning curse of an increasingly complicated civilization, is reduced to a minimum in Colvin Hollow."

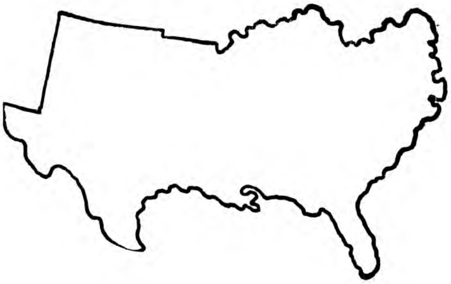
American Council on Education Studies. *Channeling Research into Education.* Washington, D. C., 1944, 187 pp. $1.25.

This volume, edited by John E. Ivey, Jr., is a product of group effort resulting from a seven-months' study made by southern educators and research specialists. It is composed chiefly of two main parts—more effective southern resource education, and the status and opportunities of research translation.

The first part of the study gives the true picture of the South concerning its natural resources, regional differences, poverty and prosperity, and their challenge to education. It is not a picture of universal southern poverty, nor is it one of an agrarian Utopia. Its waste and deficiencies are listed as a tragedy, yet the statement is made that the little publicized part of the tragedy is the fact that known processes for more efficient and beneficial resource utilization have not been interpreted and passed to the southern people in such manner as to develop both motivation and ability to react to opportunities.

The academic and the practical are discussed, and it is shown that through preparing students to know their communities more intimately and to know the actual use of community resources, the academic can be tied with the practical in resource education.

In the chapters on "Status and Opportunities of Research Translation," many needs are listed in instructional materials of region-wide scope. Such problems as state mechanisms for preparing and distributing educational materials for resource education, an accepted basis for the coordination of the educational system with agencies working with or studying resources, and some mechanism for interstate cooperation are discussed. A de-



scription is given of the procedures followed in pioneer efforts in southern research translation.

It is found in this study that even though most of the schools of the South are giving added thought to the study of local and regional problems, they have not generally made use of private and public agencies. One cause for this failure, as found in the study, lies in the fact that no basis for integrating the educational efforts of non-school public agencies has been developed either with one another or with the educational activities of the public schools and institutions of higher learning. Another cause probably is that it is not the recognized duty of many of these agencies to conduct any organized, aggressive educational program as such, although they do produce materials for public use.

The responsibility is great on state agencies for the preparation of more effective educational materials. The three separate activities of production, distribution, and use of educational materials are viewed thoroughly from every angle.

The book closes with this thought: eroded land, exploited natural resources, and wasted human energy in the South should be recognized as symbols of failing southern leadership. Evidence of man's degradation, both of himself and nature, is not alone the tragedy. The failure of those who know the remedies to communicate the facts to those who do not know and who consequently do not have the motivation to apply the remedy—that is the real tragedy. Of especial interest is the large list of bibliographical materials representing a large selective sampling of some of the more recent comprehensive and specialized treatments of modern-day challenges and opportunities of the South.

Bond, Horace Mann. *Negro Education in Alabama.* Washington: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1939, 358 pp. $3.00.

Although Mr. Bond writes principally about education for Negroes since the war between the states, he gives a glimpse of the conditions in the earlier years of Alabama's history and the history of the nation as a whole. The type of educational facilities up to the present time, according to the author, is a reflection of the attitudes of the people in various sections and the outcome of their conflicting ideas.

One is much impressed by the clearness of mind possessed by the author as he presents analytically the social, economic, and political phases of the turbulent decade of the Reconstruction Period. There is neither satisfaction nor bitterness in his appraisal of the efforts, both accomplishments and failures, of the various agencies trying to reestablish order out of chaos, with each group accruing to itself all possible economic advantages. This was a period of building public education for whites as well as Negroes, for educational needs of the prosperous southerners had been met by private institutions. Under the Reconstruction government, Negro education was assured. However, the end of Reconstruction saw a new South emerging, based not on a planter capitalism but on a rising industrial capitalism with a debtor tenant farmer struggling for existence.

The period of 1901 to 1930 has offered encouraging results. That there has been progress is evidenced by increased attendance in elementary schools, lengthened school terms, and the establishment of normal schools and high schools due to the continued industrialization and the decline of cotton economy, and the philanthrophy of wealthy Americans.

Enslow, Ella and **Harlow, Aluin.** *Schoolhouse in the Foothills.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, 239 pp. $2.00.

For sheer human interest this study of a mountain teacher's five years' experience in Shady Cove can hardly be excelled. The story, modestly told by the teacher, is an edifying narrative of poverty, suffering, death, humor, tenderness, and devotion among the people of Shady Cove. The account of her experiences among them is sincere and moving, and well worth reading.

The gist of gossip about Shady Cove ran, "Dead snake in the water bucket." . . . "Whooped the teacher right in the schoolhouse." . . . "Threw a dead cat through the winder on the teacher." . . . "Broke out all the winder lights with rocks." . . . "New teacher stayed only a week." But Miss Ella came in swinging. The mere fact that she, a woman, opened school by praying in public—and with a preacher present, too—threw the community off its balance, a balance which it never regained. Her continual fight to improve the plight of the people she served was not easy and not always appreciated. The climax is reached when, upon reaching school one morning, the teacher is met by a delegation of men who present her with a lot in the local cemetery with the explanation, "We just want you hyer with us always."

With the publication of her experiences in magazine articles, her opponents seized upon the opportunity to drive Miss Ella out. They convinced the people "that I was ridiculing them, that . . . I secretly held them in contempt." The teacher closes her narrative regretfully: "I resigned my position at the close of December. Soon workmen will be rending our neat little school building," and the lower half of the cemetery will be overflowed by the backwaters of Big Sandy Creek.

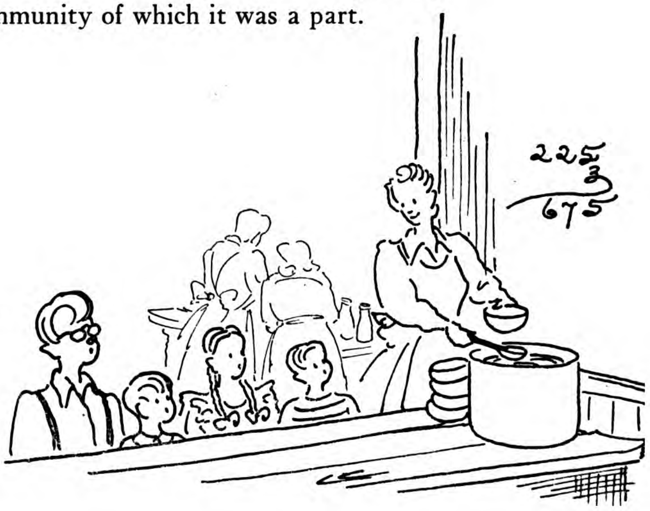
ERDMAN, LOULA GRACE. *Fair Is the Morning.* New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1945, 186 pp. $2.00.

Fair Is the Morning is a story of school and community relationship. The community described by the author is one in which there already existed certain cultural agencies and interest groups which reflected genuine needs. These needs had been neglected and community life was disintegrating.

One day a new teacher came to Hickory Ridge. Her first unorthodox activity was to help the women clean the schoolhouse. The few patrons who came to lend assistance enjoyed this mutual undertaking, and there followed a social organization whose interest was centered in the school and its activities.

The program of the school was shaped around the visible needs of the community, beginning first with the school itself. Books and library materials received first attention. Instead of the unappetizing cold lunches of cornbread and fat meat, a hot lunch program was inaugurated, growing from the flat top stove and a big pan to an orderly and well-supervised lunch room. Reading lessons included free materials on correct eating, storing of root vegetables, how to dress correctly, and principles of home management. But all was not work at the school. A school-community party was in the offing. There was a "spell down," guessing games, lollypops for the little ones, and just talking for the men.

From nut-gathering to school plays, this community school held the interest of the locality and integrated its support in an effective school program which did not limit itself to outworn schedules, but lent itself rather as a vitalizing force in improving the quality of life in the community of which it was a part.



JONES, LANCE. *The Jeanes Teacher in the United States.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937, $2.50.

The Jeanes Teacher in the United States is an account of twenty-five years' experiment in the supervision of Negro rural schools. This record of the Jeanes movement, from the inauguration of its program through more than two decades of continuous activity, covers the growth of a movement which has developed under guidance and which triumphantly points toward significant progress in the educational world of the rural South. The reader is impressed with the opportuneness of such an endeavor when the author writes: "More and more as the nineteenth century drew to a close, men's minds turned toward the schools and to education as the South's great need and hope."

The first Jeanes supervisor, Virginia Randolph, worked with patience and resourcefulness against innumerable odds to make her school a community center. The amazing results of this teacher in her efforts to interrelate school and community life were not overlooked by educators and visionaries. The result was the establishment of the Jeanes fund—a fund set aside for the purpose of inaugurating and guiding the Virginia Randolph teaching program in Negro rural schools throughout the South.

This book covers a detailed exposition of events, from the pioneer Jeanes teacher in the experimental program, through increased endowment and enlarged sponsorship, to the progressive undertaking of recent years under a well-established routine of activities relating to health, welfare, recreation, and integrated with the general education program—all working toward a general betterment of the social and economic phases of life in the Negro elementary schools.

SCHATZMANN, IMAN E. *The Country School.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942, 233 pp. $1.50.

This is a richly illustrated account of first-hand studies of rural schools in five European countries, and the United States as they existed before World War II. It attempts to show how the country schools of Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, England, Italy, and the United States have been improved. In addition to a splendid bibliography and index, historical and statistical material is presented in a style which is informal and readable. The book is a real contribution to the literature of rural life and education. To lay people, who are interested in helping to improve rural communities, it should offer much help. It is one of the few books that describes rural education in different countries in the non-technical terms of people, schools, homes, and children's experiences.

The author, who speaks English, French, Italian, and German, was able to get close to the lives of the rural people. She visited many schools, and talked to countless teachers, children, parents, farmers, artists, administrators, educators, and many others. By comparing the United States with European democracies two facts become evident: "(a) that the American public school has often been too utilitarian in spirit, and (b) the education of all, and particularly of rural children and youth, involves the study and use of resources and needs, not only as an effective process for building and preserving democracy, but as a means of enlisting the younger generation in the social and cultural enrichment of their communities." The author's description of the schools of different countries and the bibliographies on each are valuable references for community leaders.

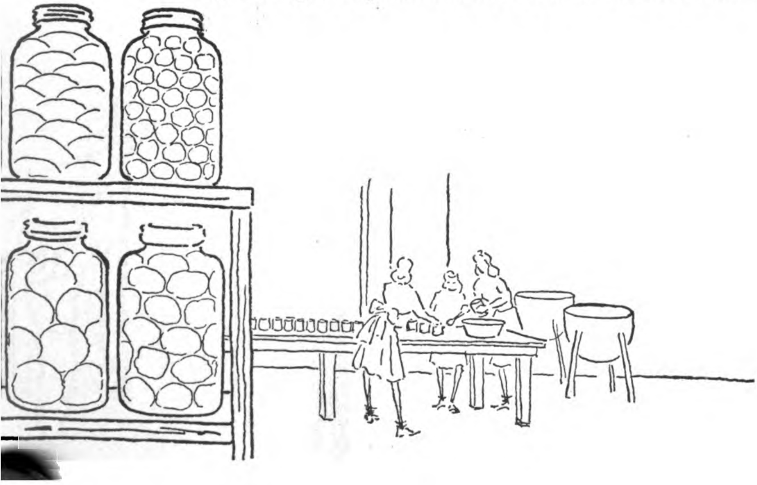
WALLACE, WHILDEN, CHRIETZBERG, JAMES, and SIMS, VERNER M. *The Story of Holtville.* A Southern Assn. Study, 1944. 75c.

The Story of Holtville tells of the changes and developments in the Holtville High School during its five years as a Southern Study School. The book is an imaginary account of how four visitors saw the school on a two or three-day visit in 1943, and thus the picture given of the school is one after four years of experimental development.

When Holtville entered the Southern Study in the fall of 1938-39, it was in most ways a typical rural consolidated school, teaching the usual subjects and following the usual standard schedule. Because considerable progress had already been made in developing the school and community, however, and because the school had an excellent record in scholarship, Holtville had a favorable background for the experiment.

Education at Holtville, instead of being a rigid scheduling of classes and credits, is centered on serving the individual's needs and purposes. At the same time, it uses the individual in serving the school and community. Instead of being required to take certain subjects, the student is required first to use his own intelligence in planning what he wishes to do and then in figuring out what he needs to know in order to reach these goals. This does not mean that the student is allowed to do just what he wishes. His work is carefully planned through thought and study on his part, through several conferences with his teacher, and by talking over his goals with his parents.

Holtville High School operates on the idea that people learn by doing. Subjects are studied not as abstract series of rules but



as service courses. Students in commercial work keep the school bank, serve as student secretaries, and help in typing the school paper. Those in the health or personal hygiene classes keep a first aid clinic, clean the fountains, operate a beauty parlor and barber shop, and one serves as assistant in the dental clinic. Some of the other student activity groups of the 119 listed at Holtville are photography, journalism, radio, hatchery, gardening, plumbing, farm machinery, telephone, pre-flight, woodworking, printing, pottery, track, and band.

Probably one of the most significant developments of all at Holtville is the increasing cooperation between the school and the community. Early in the study the students made a survey of the community's needs, and community services were set into operation as ways of meeting these needs. Thus, the agriculture department owns and operates three tractors with tractor plows, a 24-disc harrow, and a power spray for orchards. Students operate a food-processing plant, both canning and dehydration. Farmers of the area, who previously lost around 25 per cent of the meat they killed, now bring their animals to the school refrigeration plant for butchering and handling, or quick-freezing. A feed mill is very important to the community. The work is paid for by toll taken from the grains brought in by the farmers.

Although the Southern Association Study at Holtville is over, the new life in the school will continue. Community services have improved living standards and quickened community life. All of these results are in addition to the less tangible rewards in character growth and personality development gained by the students through the practicing of cooperative and democratic living.

THE CHURCH

Brunner, Edmund deS. *Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches.* New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1928, 173 pp. $1.25.

Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches gives valuable information for those who are interested in the growth of town and country churches. This volume is the result of a survey conducted in 1922, in which twenty-four states are represented: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. The churches surveyed were six urban, twenty-two village, and twelve open-country.

The survey revealed that the work in these churches was evangelistic in nature, with the result that a larger percentage of new membership came by profession of faith instead of by letter. It was found that a religious education training program existed in most of the churches, with community service activities available. Many of the churches offered physical education facilities with gymnasiums and community houses. Working through organized outlines, most of the churches advocated long-range planning. Means of advertising and publicity programs were a part of church outlines.

The study revealed further that the churches are community-minded. They cooperate with the schools and are interested in civic improvements, activities for relief, citizenship, and culture. "These investigations . . . indicate very clearly that the rural church is now in possession of a program that meets the needs of the people. They prove that evangelistic zeal and social service can be combined . . . to arouse the interests and then command the loyalty of a community of any kind in country or in town."

DAWBER, MARK A. *Rebuilding Rural America.* New York: Friendship Press, 1937, 210 pp. $1.00.

Rebuilding Rural America is concerned primarily with the challenge to the rural church to create "a new motive for life" in the country. Leaders in the rural church need first of all to recognize the radical transitions in rural organization that others have already seen. "The rebuilding of rural America is of prime spiritual significance, not alone to rural life but to the cities and the nation."

A dependence upon the soil has always linked agriculture and religious experience; and if we would maintain those spiritual ideals which have given us our system of values, they must be kept alive in the rural areas that are supplying a large part of our population. A feeling of relationship to divine providence gives the human being a sense of stewardship of the land—a sense which has been lost, as evidenced by the nearly 160 million acres of soil that have been made practically useless by erosion. The rural church must help resist the forces of exploitation and become a focal point for those social, moral, and spiritual values which can make farming a "way of life."

Before rural churches can lead the farmers in cooperation, however, they must achieve it themselves. A multiplicity of denominations is the price which has been paid for religious freedom. The many activities that the several churches could carry on together would include vacation church schools, week-day religious education, recreation, social work, and evangelism. More adequate and specialized leadership for certain groups in rural areas is definitely needed. When reports on conditions among these groups are read, it becomes clear that "rural America is a great missionary church."

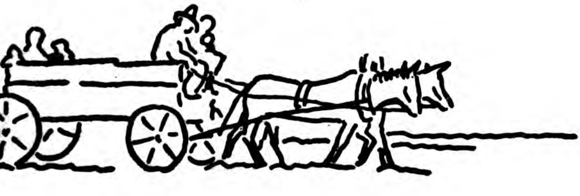
HEWITT, A. W. *God's Back Pasture.* Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1941, 144 pp. $1.50.

God's Back Pasture was written to give "rural apprentices with urban ambition" and disdain for the "backwoods" some glimpses of the wide landscapes which the author has seen from his lifetime rural pastorate. When asked, "What is wrong with the rural church?" he points out the "invincible ignorance" concerning the rural church and the gross exploitation by higher officials. "Rural beginnings bring wisdom . . ., but it is unhealthy to think of the country church as a practice ground only." Within the church are deathly poisons of "fatalistic pessimism," "pious immorality," and "economic stringency."

Encouraging advice is given to the young minister in the rural field on the subject of architectural planning of the church and parish, church finance, pastor's cooperation with social and community organizations, and the pastor as an educator with Jesus as his model.

The concluding chapter tells a humorous story of an old rustic, who having visited New York, sadly concluded, "It will never be a success. It is too far away." This statement, the author proposes, is the final philosophy of rural life. He declines the city pastorate because, "The city is too remote from the center of real advantages, the city is too lonely and lacking in social privileges, the city has too little opportunity for great minds and real leadership, and, as a minister, I could not afford to go to the city because the latter so lacks opportunity for professional advancement."

There is triumph in rural faith, writes the author, who concludes his book with "The Prayer of the Rural Men."

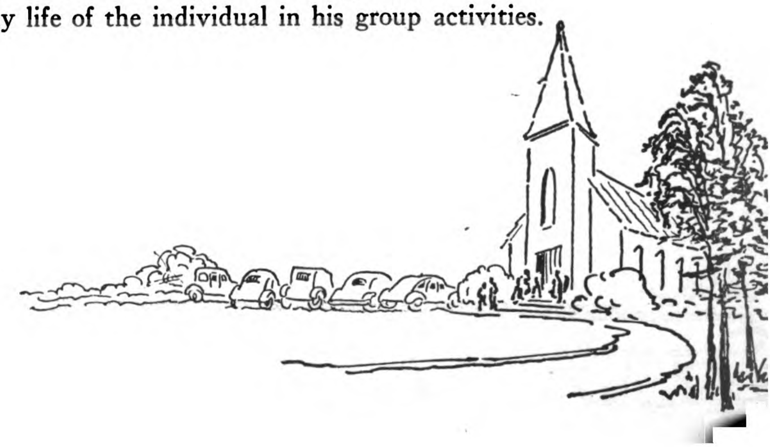


LINDSTROM, DAVID EDGAR. *The Church in Rural Life.* Champaign: Garrard Press, 1939, 145 pp. 85c.

As a social scientist with a rural background and a religious attitude, Dr. Lindstrom looks at the country church without ecclesiastical or denominational prejudice. His deep concern is to help the rural church and the rural minister to face their tasks intelligently and with a new passion based upon an understanding of country life.

In this book two emphases stand out prominently: (1) that economic and social security must be stabilized and assured for the farmer if the best in rural and national life is to be preserved, and (2) that all institutions, and particularly the church in the whole of society, must work tirelessly toward that end. The institutions must be a means and not an end in this struggle for security. Looking at the obligation of the church, the author states: (1) The church which serves rural people must understand the people and the motive impelling them to act before it can have much influence on behavior, either of the individual or of the group; (2) the church has a real obligation to create an open mind among its members to new ways of doing things.

The only true security is that attained by the action of the people themselves and especially when they are fired with the highest motives of which a people are capable. The greatest task of the church is to live in the everyday life of the individual in all his group activities. If ministers are trained especially for the rural field, doubtless much of the prestige now seemingly lost to the rural church could be regained and the church might well become a new center of rural institutional life. The church elevated to this position would be enabled to perform its greatest task—to live in the everyday life of the individual in his group activities.



SMITH, ROCKWELL C. *The Church in Our Town.* Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945, 190 pp. $1.50.

Here one finds a systematic treatment of the responsibility of the church to the rural community. It is a book about the church as a group among groups. The author, professor of rural church administration and sociology at Garrett (Evanston, Illinois), approaches the theme with scientific competence and also with a thorough commitment to the values of religion and the importance of the church as an institution. Dr. Smith graphically pictures the variations between urban and rural society. His procedure is to compare these types of society on the following traits or characteristics: social unit, social contacts, social bond, social values, social control, social environment, and social focus.

Educational agencies and their programs are discussed. In its educational work the church is not operating in a vacuum but is one of a series of educational agencies within its community. In defining the role of the church in the community, the author gives seven functions of the church: (1) To serve as the champion of cooperation, (2) to be the moral conscience of the community, (3) to be a supplemental agency, (4) to experiment, (5) to train community leaders, (6) to represent the Kingdom of God, and (7) to be a sanctuary for all.

In conclusion the author writes, "The rural community does not live of and by itself. It rests upon family and neighborhood; it reaches on to metropolitan sub-region, region, nation, and world. . . . In our day the warm flame of rural localism must be delivered from the smoke of provincialism if light is to be cast upon the pressing problems which are our common lot." Notes and bibliography serve to introduce the reader to general literature on rural church-community relations.

HEALTH

Farm Foundation. *Medical Care and Health Services for Rural People.* Chicago, 1944, 226 pp. $1.00.

Medical Care and Health Services for Rural People is a study resulting from a conference sponsored by the Farm Foundation. The purpose of the conference was to bring together a selected group of rural men and women representing farm organizations in various sections of the country to meet with medical men and technical specialists to consider the problems rural people face in obtaining medical care and health services, and the ways and means by which their organizations and community agencies may help to obtain these services most satisfactorily through group effort.

The medical care situation in rural communities is affected by geographical, sociological and economic factors. The present critical situation is due, in part, to the migration of medical personnel to urban centers, lack of hospitals and facilities in rural areas, inadequate public health trained personnel, and the great lack of enabling legislation. In those states that do have permissive legislation, a program of health education is sadly needed. Great dissimilarities are apparent in recent approaches to the solution of the problem of equalizing medical care costs with farm family low-income groups—eligibility of membership, sources of maintenance funds, benefits granted, administrative policies, payment of physicians, degree of local responsibility, and representation of lay and medical groups on governing boards. A discussion of the Canadian plan tends to clarify some of these variations.

The study closes with specific recommendations for the development of a sound program of health and medical care in rural areas, indicating a deep interest in the problems of rural people by all who participated in the conference.

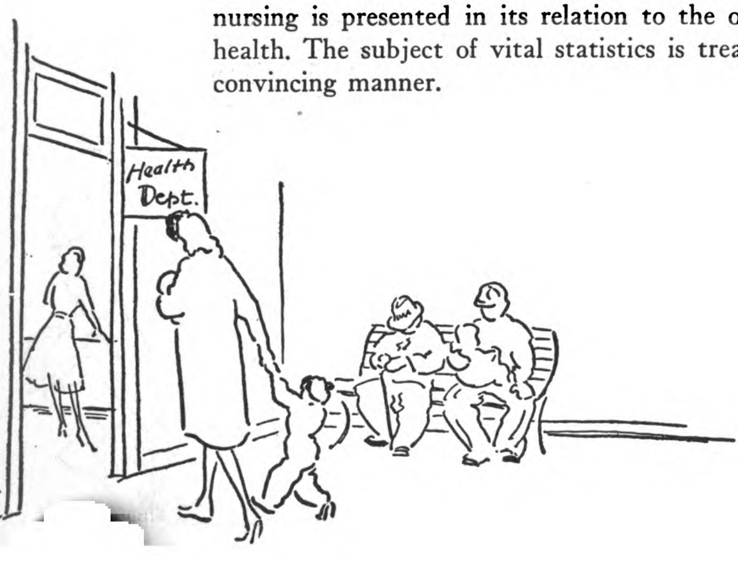
Mustard, Harry S. *Rural Health Practice.* New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1936, 603 pp. $4.00.

The author, with twenty years' experience as a rural health officer offers this comprehensive volume on the organization and practice of rural health departments. His wide range of information, suggestions, and discussions reflect his southern experiences. Rural and small town psychology, resources or lack of resources, and other assets and handicaps, he treats not necessarily as health problems but as important collateral factors.

Over and above population and civil unit characteristics of a rural area, Dr. Mustard recognizes three distinctive things: (1) the closeness of the government to the people (the county courthouse or the town hall is regarded by the rural citizen as being essentially his); (2) the rural man's individuality; and (3) his adherence to custom and tradition. Almost every rural health worker finds it necessary to overcome the expression, "What was good enough for my grandfather is good enough for me."

In the discussion of organization, administration, procedure, and techniques, the practices which meet the needs of health departments and health agencies are considered. The ever-changing theories and methods of practice of public health work are discussed. The author criticizes routine methods, inherited and passed from one health officer to another, obviously outmoded and of little value today.

The chapters on setting up new health organizations, especially county health units, are thorough and practical. Public health nursing is presented in its relation to the other fields of public health. The subject of vital statistics is treated in a simple and convincing manner.



North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station. *Medical Care Services in North Carolina.* Raleigh, 1945, 82 pp. Free.

This book is a report made by the State Hospital and Medical Care Commission of North Carolina in 1944, surveying the health needs of the state and offering recommendations for improvement. Approximately half of the statistical portion of this report is devoted to national data, giving the standings of the southern states on various health items in comparison with the other states of the nation; the second half is concerned with North Carolina only.

The data show first the shortage of personnel and inadequate hospital facilities, then the existing poor health conditions, and the economic and social factors which influence these conditions. The southern states rank low on hospital facilities and personnel, with the result that poor health conditions are prevalent and a high mortality rate inevitable. Another indication of poor health conditions is the percentage of registrants rejected for military service. For the period February 1943 through August 1943, the eleven southeastern states fell in the last twelve rankings for the nation.

This report stresses three aspects of the problems which must be worked on at once—more facilities must be provided; the people must be educated to the need of good medical care; and more convenient methods of payment must be found. Improvement of the situation must lie in *group effort* and *public action.* Recommendations include the establishment of a medical school, loan fund for medical students, new hospitals and health centers, health insurance and prepayment plans, hospital aid for low income groups, public health programs, and a state hospital and medical care council.

SOUTHMAYD, HENRY J. and SMITH, GEDDES. *Small Community Hospitals.* New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1944, 182 pp. $2.

Those interested in small hospitals—whether as citizens, physicians, or hospital administrators—will find in this book a frank discussion of the major questions such hospitals face: What communities should have hospitals? What area should a hospital try to serve? How should it be staffed? How can the hospital help its community to get better medical care?

"If 50,000 to 100,000 people will use a single hospital placed at the natural center of a homogeneous trading area, they can have about as good a hospital as the same number of people in a single city could expect to have, and a far better one—both in physical equipment and in professional resources—than any single small town and its immediate neighborhood are likely to be able to support for their own use." This is the thesis of *Small Community Hospitals* and the principle on which the Commonwealth Fund rural hospital program was set up nearly twenty years ago.

The organization of the hospital should reflect its status as a community agency. The modern community hospital under voluntary auspices is described as a middle-of-the-road merger of the charity institution and a private facility. Public relations is an important phase of the community hospital program, and proves to be a valuable asset for promoting the goodwill of the institution. Discussion is given to prepayment hospital plans. The authors lay stress on the hospital job rather than the hospital plant, but a chapter on building design covers the broad architectural principles which have been tested in fourteen different hospitals. The appendix gives valuable material including the typical By-Laws for a Voluntary Community Hospital Corporation.

TATE, LELAND B. *The Health and Medical-Care Situation in Rural Virginia.* Blacksburg, 1944, 51 pp. Free.

The Health and Medical-Care Situation in Rural Virginia is a state health bulletin with statistics on health and medical care conditions in rural Virginia. Although the present day picture of rural health conditions appears very dark, the current situation is far better than that of a century, or even a generation, ago. In 1920, 81 out of every 1,000 babies born in Virginia died before they reached one year of age. In 1940 the infant mortality rate was 58 per 1,000 live births, but there is room for improvement. The 1940 rate was 11 points higher than the national rate of 47. With regard to medical personnel, the ratio of Virginia physicians to the population is 1 to 1,365 persons, while the ratio for predominantly rural counties is 1 to 4,873 persons. There are 1.1 hospital beds per 1,000 rural people, while less than one-third of Virginia's local hospitals for general use are located in rural territory which holds two-thirds of the state's people. Virginia's health-service agencies include two state medical schools, a preventorium for teachers, local health departments serving fifty counties, and various miscellaneous agencies having health programs.

For future alternatives, the first is that local health departments be doubled in number. A second valuable development would be the establishment of more preventoriums on a regional basis. Prepayment plans for medical service are in their infancy in Virginia and need to be expanded in the future, as well as some form of health insurance. Only when high medical costs are met in more efficient and effective ways can the masses of people have and pay for adequate medical care. Only when adequate personnel is available for public service will effective health practices be inaugurated.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

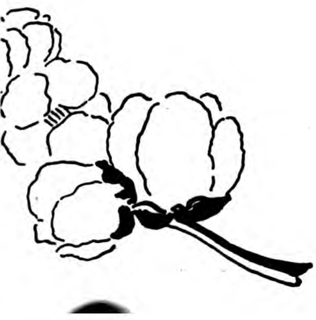
Cash, W. J. *The Mind of the South.* New York: Knopf, 1941, 429 pp. $3.75.

The Mind of the South is a study of those psychological factors which have influenced the way the people of this broad area have lived, thought, and acted from colonial times to the present. Writes the author, "The South, one might say, is a tree with many age rings, with its limbs and trunk bent and twisted by all the winds of the years, but with its tap root in the Old South."

The slow emergence of an organized society in primitive conditions made impossible the development of any real aristocracy for a hundred years, and then it could thrive only along the coast. As a result, a great part of the South must be regarded as still only a few steps removed from the frontier stage by the time of the Civil War.

An understanding of the frontier attitude, of the "simple rustic figure" at the center of the Old South, is the frame for the whole structure of the southern mind. The first and dominant trait of this mind was an intense individualism. This individualism was largely responsible for the southern pattern of violence, for the lack of narrow class-consciousness, and for the extremely loose restrictions of government.

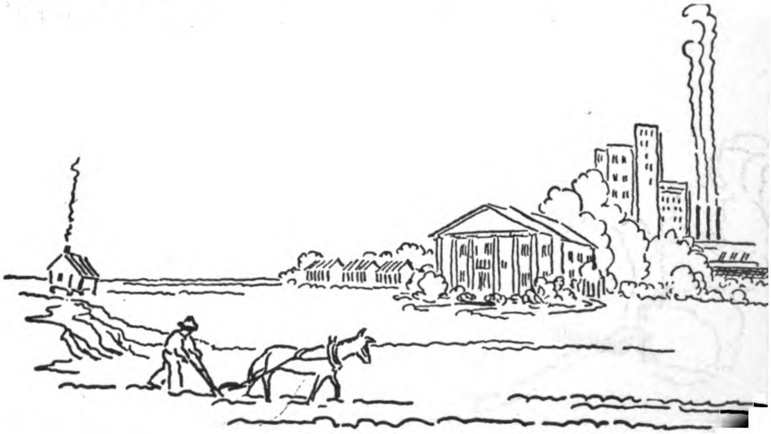
A second great southern trait has been the tendency toward unreality. The freedom of the new world and the color and haze of the southern landscape combined to make the southerner an incurable romantic. Closely related to this romanticism is the trait of hedonism. The channels of action for this romantic and hedonistic people we find in their love of rhetoric and their keen delight in political activities.



The northern victory in the Civil War, far from smashing the pattern of southern thought, strengthened it almost beyond reckoning. But in the intense pressure aroused by Reconstruction, southern loyalty paralyzed at the very root that culture it would preserve. Tolerance and criticism—in religion, in politics, in racial problems—became impossible. There followed in time, the revived Ku Klux Klan, anti-evolution laws, and the solidarity of Democratic allegiance.

The fate of the small farmers after the war was even more disastrous than that of the planters. With the danger of so many whites being driven down not just to an economic equality with the Negro, but to a lower standard than either had ever known, the South turned to its old enemy—Progress—and the call to build cotton mills became a crusade. The total effect of the cotton mill growth was "a mighty confirmation and revivification of the individualistic outlook, which aided in the defeat of Populism." The old southern "extravagance" appeared again in force also, this time in the form of skyscrapers in towns where land was plentiful. Progress strengthened rather than weakened the hold of the old southern patterns.

After World War I the South greeted the New Deal with intense enthusiasm, but in the frustration caused by the dwindling of foreign markets for cotton, government restriction has been blamed. There are some men in the South able to look rationally at their region and criticize its failures. This enlightened group, however, able to furnish the best intellectual leadership the South has ever had, has been "almost wholly unarticulated with the body of the South." According to the author, this absence of true leadership, together with the lack of any mood of realism, has been the South's final great tragedy.



Couch, W. T., Editor. *Culture in the South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934, 711 pp. $4.00.

Culture in the South is a symposium by thirty-one specialists covering an amazingly wide range of southern life and thought. The different points of view held by the various writers, and the widely divergent aspects of southern life discussed indicate that the Solid South is non-existent politically, culturally, and geographically.

Dr. Charles Ramsdell's essay, "The Southern Heritage," presents a well-knit history of the economic and social development of the South that lays the foundation for study of the many facets of southern culture to follow. A profile sketch of the principal geographic areas of the South, given by Rupert Vance, presents a panoramic view of the southern regions and their changing characteristics. The direction these changes must take is the question asked by Josephine Pinckney. Which will be masters—the old patterns, or the forces of steel and machines?

Closely related to this question is the future of southern agriculture, discussed by A. E. Parkins. A region of diversified agriculture, taken as a whole, the South nevertheless struggles under King Cotton as one of its greatest problems. Another problem of extreme importance, not only to the South but to the entire nation, is soil erosion. In learning to protect his land, the southern farmer must learn, too, how to be more self-sufficient.

The southern farmer can look confidently to the future, according to Clarence Poe. The intelligent farmer of tomorrow will develop a balance between his plant and animal production, take more care of the soil's fertility, learn cooperative marketing, and find ways to reduce tenancy. Broadus Mitchell believes that a new attitude toward industry is as much in process as agricultural changes. Commercial manufacturing has not come to the South without bringing with it most of the attendant evils of the early industrial revolution.

Southern journalism, according to John D. Allen, has lost whatever distinctive qualities it once owned in its new industrial culture; and newspapers in general are "smug class organs, standardized, superficial, often unfair in the presenting of news." The trend of literature in general is discussed by Donald Davidson, who analyzes with sympathetic insight the problem of integration and loyalty the southern writers face, and urges them to reestablish the southern tradition in life and literature.

In the field of education the South suffers from several handicaps, as indicated by Edgar W. Knight. It attempts to maintain two systems of education for large numbers of children scattered over wide areas. Both in public school systems and in higher education, explains H. C. Nixon, the southern expenditure on salaries for teachers, library facilities, and equipment compares unfavorably with other sections. It is true, nevertheless, that the South spends more effort, proportionately, than any other section, in an attempt to educate its larger number of children on its smaller financial resources.

The different groups and classes of people are given separate chapters for analysis. The industrial worker, the coal miner, the Appalachian mountaineer, the "poor white," the Negro, and the middle-class southerner—all are presented with their histories and characteristics. Few of the many and diverse aspects of southern culture are overlooked.

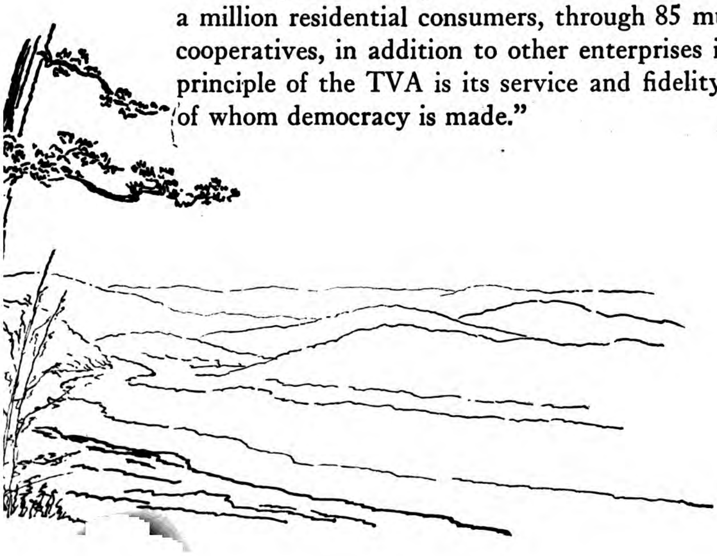
DUFFUS, ROBERT LUTHER. *The Valley and Its People.* New York: Knopf, 1944, 167 pp. $2.75.

The Valley and Its People is a picture-story of the Tennessee Valley Authority—the conception of the idea, the building of the dams, the changes in the people of the valley, and the importance of the whole program today to the war effort.

The author first presents the Valley of the Tennessee with all its beauty, its power, its forests, its gullied slopes. In a year an acre of land in the mountains of the southern Appalachians receives six thousand tons of water. Man can use the power of this water to create; or he can let it move unchecked through the lands he has bared of protecting trees to sweep away his homes and his soil.

The TVA did not become firmly established without what was termed "the fighting years." But by 1939 it was well on its way to becoming an institution. Today twenty-one dams of the system are in operation, each having, or soon to have electric generators.

The tasks that TVA has fulfilled have been tremendous. In something more than ten years it built sixteen dams. This involved not only the actual construction work, but acquiring the land, often relocating highways and railroads, and even building a town for the workers. The dams "provide 650 miles of nine-foot river channel to Knoxville, all the year around. And they make it possible to generate electric current for more than half a million residential consumers, through 85 municipalities and 45 cooperatives, in addition to other enterprises in the Valley." The principle of the TVA is its service and fidelity to "the little men of whom democracy is made."



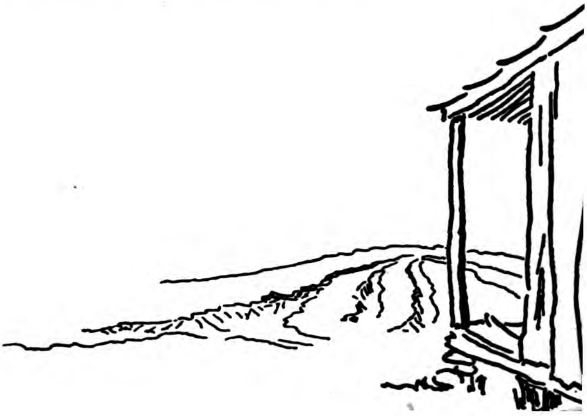
JOHNSON, GERALD WHITE. *The Wasted Land.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937, 110 pp. $1.50.

The author has used as a basis for this book Howard Odum's *Southern Regions of the United States,* but the inferences that he has drawn from the facts are his own. *The Wasted Land* is a challenge to the South to meet the appalling problems which imperil her future with an intelligence that will return the region to a level of civilization higher than it now knows, or possibly has ever known.

The most dangerous enemy the southern people face is water. In addition, there is another tremendous waste of land by the practice of devoting to one-crop agriculture acres of land which could be much more intelligently used for different crops. The evils of the one-crop system and the doom of cotton economy have been recognized for years.

Industrialization can ameliorate the conditions of this agrarian region considerably, if followed along regional lines of development. As serious as the waste of soil in the South is the waste of human wealth. The South has lost three and a half million persons by emigration alone. Another great source of human waste lies with the eight million Negroes of the southern population. The region will benefit when the problem is recognized not as one of keeping the Negro suppressed, but one of getting the most value out of him as a skilled and educated member of society.

Essential in attacking these problems is a regional attitude whereby the South may establish one really first-rank university, approach a successful balance between industry and agriculture, and develop the technical skill and intellectual leadership so desperately needed.



KENDRICK, BENJAMIN B. and ARNETT, ALEX M. *The South Looks at Its Past.* University of North Carolina Press, 1935. $2.

The South Looks at Its Past is an interpretative study of those forces and events of the South's history most closely related to its present problems. The traditional glorified picture of the South's past is "fully as important as the actuality, in that it lies at the basis of southern ideals and attitudes."

The principal error in the glorified traditional old South, according to the author, is that it seems to imply a society of three classes: planters, "poor whites," and slaves. This overlooks almost completely the large group of middle-class farmers, and the existence of farmers who were poor and white, but not of the "po-white trash" classification. The mass of self-reliant and hospitable but generally "prosaic and hum-drum" southern farmers gathered at village stores, the county seat, and rural churches in a manner not very different from that in other parts of the country.

From the very beginning of the settlement of the American coast, dissimilarities were developing between the Northeast and Southeast that were finally to culminate in the bloody conflict of 1861-1865. As a result of their divergent economic development and a series of events which fixed the pattern, the South in time became an economic dependence of the industrial Northeast. This galling condition was a very important factor in the desire for secession. Economic and political arguments, while basic in the background of the struggle, were lost in the fierce emotionalism that developed over the question of slavery. In the war that followed, the South staked its all and lost, and its civilization was wrecked beyond hope of repair.

The quarter of a century that followed the restoration of native white rule in the South was marked by a conflict between those who looked to the past and those who looked to the future. A New South was emerging slowly from the ruins, and it was the rapid rise of industry that stood out most prominently both as cause and effect of the new movement.

With the passing of political power from agriculture to business groups came farm tenancy, one-crop agriculture, and the credit system. From the Civil War to the twentieth century approximately 90 per cent of the farmers of the South remained in the toils of debt and dependence.

By 1900 the conquest of the South by the North was complete. The Old South had become little more than a memory. The rise of industrialism added to the distress of southern agriculture. However, a new light of hope had been shed on conditions in the South by the educational renaissance which had its beginning toward the close of the nineteenth century.

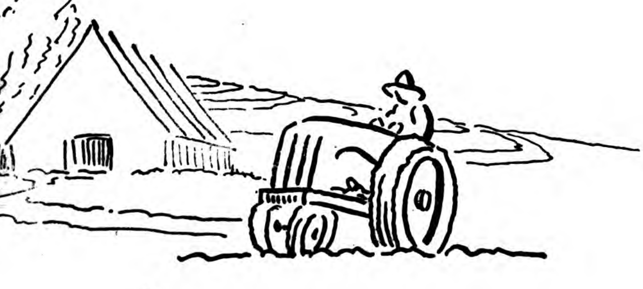
In the depression of the 1930's there developed among certain groups a growing tendency to question the validity of some of the New South's doctrines. Plans for the improvement of southern life were introduced by visionaries throughout the nation, and studies conducted by national, regional, and state agencies placed emphasis on the deficiencies, potentialities, and needs of southern rural areas. The study closes with suggestions for the future, conservation of natural resources, revival of agrarian culture and its reintegration in the national pattern, diversified farming, and production for local consumption.

LILIENTHAL, DAVID E. *TVA-Democracy on the March.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1944, 248 pp. $2.50.

This book is an account of the changes in the Tennessee Valley wrought through the TVA in the first ten years of its program. It is both a record of what has been accomplished, and an interpretation of these achievements—the twelve billion kilowatt hours of electricity in the hands of the people by 1944, the growing industries of the region, the $10,000,000 annual savings to consumers through reduced rates, the successful control of flood waters in 1943, and the renewed vitality of the land.

In contrast to the attitude toward Muscle Shoals during World War I simply as a means of getting power, the TVA regards power development important only as part of a total program of flood control, navigation, soil conservation, and resource development. The guiding policy behind every activity of the TVA program has been to integrate the many problems into one whole, and to develop the resources of the river and the region "in that unity with which nature herself regards her resources—the water, the land, and the men together a 'seamless web'."

Such a valley development could be realized in its entirety only through widespread participation of the people themselves, or through "democracy at the grass roots." The TVA by its delegation of responsibility, its use of local agencies whenever possible, and its efforts to keep administration close to the people reveals to us an alternative which is necessarily bureaucratic and remote from the people involved. We know now that a centralized authorship can operate through *decentralized administration.* The example of the TVA offers hope that the enterprise can be made to work for people, controlled by the people themselves.

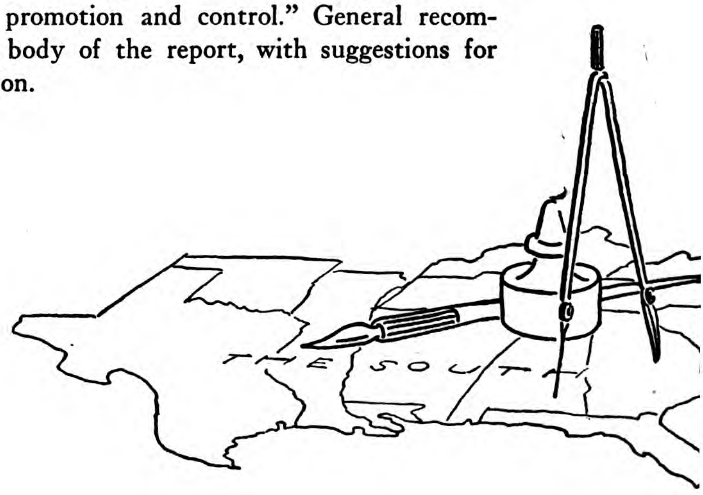


National Resources Planning Board. *Regional Planning, Part XI—The Southeast.* U. S. Government Printing Office, 55c.

This report embraces the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Between 1930 and 1940 a series of programs, both in private enterprise and in government, was directed toward agricultural adjustment and industrial development in the region. This study is primarily an attempt to answer certain questions: What changes have these programs wrought in population, in farming, in industrial production, in employment, in income? At what point on the road to economic rehabilitation did they leave the region in 1940? What will a long-range regional development program contain in light of the progress made at the end of the decade, the impact of war, and post-war adjustment?

The first part of the report is a descriptive and analytical inventory of the basic material and human resources of the Southeast, the facts and figures concerning its climate, soils, forests, rivers, minerals, and the recent changes affecting the people of the region, their distribution and growth, urbanization, and composition. Part two is devoted to a series of technical statements in specific fields prepared by southern regional specialists—agriculture, forestry, water resources, business, industry, education, health, housing, recreation, government and public administration.

With respect to further research, planning, and conducting improvement programs, the report emphasizes that "the region must take the chief responsibility for its own development as a substitute for outside promotion and control." General recommendations follow the body of the report, with suggestions for public and private action.



VANCE, RUPERT B. *Human Geography of the South.* University of North Carolina Press, 1932, 596 pp. $4.00.

This book is a comprehensive treatment of the relation of the resources of the South to its cultural adequacy. It is an effort to synthesize the forces of geography, ecology, human biology, economics, and technology in a study of the interaction of men and nature in the southern region.

Part one of the book deals with the South's physical and cultural background. The second part of the book discusses the South's resources—the soil, piney woods, live-stock, southern agriculture; and its subregions—the highlands, the delta, the Piedmont, and the southwest.

One of the most serious deficiencies in southern agriculture is in its livestock production. The livestock industry is conditioned by the cotton economy. The unique features of the cotton culture have bound southern agriculture to landlords, supply merchants, and credit institutions who hold the economic keys but are themselves chained by inability to finance experiments and diversification.

The last part of the book deals with the structure of a regional economy in the South, and prospects of a regional reconstruction. The colonial economy in its desperate effort to maintain a balance of trade with the industrial areas leads to over-exploitation of natural resources without accumulation of capital goods to take their place in exchange.

In summary the author recommends regional planning broad enough for mastery of regional resources which will include both an orderly industrial development and a reorganization of agriculture.

WEBB, WALTER PRESCOTT. *Divided We Stand.* Austin, Texas: The Acorn Press, 1944, 151 pp. $2.00.

Divided We Stand is a stirring analysis of the economic situation by which the North holds the South and West in colonial status, and how "it has drawn the bonds constantly tighter until it owns not only its own section but a controlling interest in the South and the West."

According to the author, northern dominance began far back in the past, but the growth of power which is so important today may be traced from 1865. Three examples of government subsidy the North legislated for itself are the protective tariff, Civil War pensions, and patents. The significance of a high protective tariff was recognized as early as 1828. Pension payments were closely related to tariff, as they used the surplus which the tariff embarrassingly piled up in the treasury. The third subsidy to the North is the benefit of patents which are, in effect, government monopolies.

The real economic agent which holds an ever-tightening grip on the South and the West is the modern corporation. The structure which makes such control possible, the author terms "America's feudal system." There is one important difference between medieval and American feudalism; the first arose to provide order in the midst of chaos, and it fulfilled its responsibility; the second arose merely to make profits, and assumes no responsibility other than the payment of taxes. The "way out" suggested by the author is a democratic one. By a cohesion of effort, the people could issue a mandate to a party behind which they unite to: (1) disperse industry, (2) abolish the legal status of corporations as citizens, (3) overhaul the patent system, and (4) overhaul freight rates.

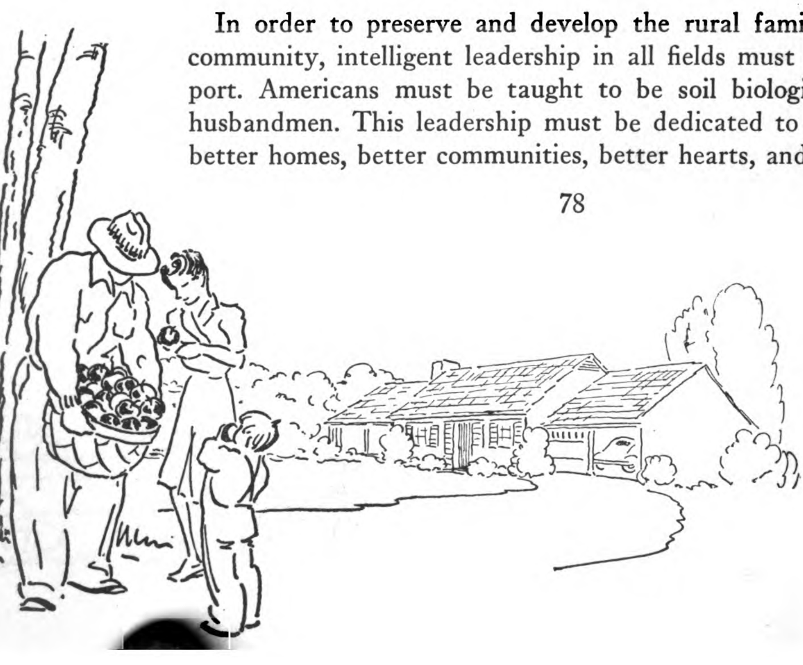
RURAL PROBLEMS

LIGUTTI, LUIGI G. and RAWE, JOHN C. *Rural Roads to Security.* Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1940, 359 pp. $2.75.

Rural Roads to Security considers "America's Third Struggle for Freedom," an attempt to "secure a truer liberty and greater independence through a more effective, personal, and widely distributed ownership." This involves the restoration of the home to its proper place as a natural economic unit, by providing for family-centered production and activity where the child can soon become an economic asset rather than an economic liability. The part of the government in the struggle is to enable the independent farmer and the small enterprise to survive, to withhold economic and legal advantages of large enterprises, and to favor dispersion rather than concentration of industry.

Modern industry has destroyed the moral functions of the urban family by curtailing activities directly concerned with the preservation and welfare of the family group. Also commercialization, factories, farms, and corporations are destructive evils in the rural area. Self-sufficiency, or production for home use, should be the first concern of the farmer rather than pure commercialization with all of its destructiveness. Part-time farming and garden programs for subsistence offer great opportunities for people in mines and factories. Homesteaders should be encouraged. City dwellers as well should see the economic, social, and spiritual opportunities for advancement which agriculture affords.

In order to preserve and develop the rural family and rural community, intelligent leadership in all fields must give its support. Americans must be taught to be soil biologists and real husbandmen. This leadership must be dedicated to better fields, better homes, better communities, better hearts, and better lives.



SANDERSON, DWIGHT. *Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization.* New York: John Wiley & Son, 1942, $4.00.

Anyone planning to deal directly with rural or village people, particularly ministers, teachers, or social workers will find this an enlightening book. It will be helpful to persons who are unfamiliar with the inner lives of these people, to understand their background by providing a comprehensive study of environmental conditions in rural areas as well as an insight into the rural institutions, groups, and classes of this part of our society. In relation to the total population of the United States, this portion of the population in 1910 was 94.2 per cent; by 1940 it had declined to 43.5 per cent.

In the task of holding the membership of its churches, the rural community has a definite psychological advantage over the urban one in the fact that the smaller the membership of a church, the more immediate becomes the responsibility of its individual members. But in spite of this and also the fact that the church is the oldest and in many cases, the most outstanding rural institution, research shows that it is declining. In twenty-one areas studied from 1920 to 1930 the decline was one church in eight, while the decline during the following six years was one church in five.

It is good to know that the teacher-pupil relationship in the one-room school is more significant than in the larger schools. It is stated that if one-room teachers were well trained and remained with the school for several years, as they usually do in European villages, there would be much to be said for the one-room school insofar as teacher leadership is concerned. The distribution of the people on the land, with consequent distances to the

schools, and the inability of rural people to support them are two prime factors contributing to the inferiority of rural to city schools.

Both mortality and morbidity rates are higher in urban areas than in rural ones. In the most reliable data concerning sickness rates, the lowest rate was 787 cases of illness per 1,000 population observed during twelve months in the open country, and the highest rate was 937 for villages and towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants. In rural areas the most important health institution is still the country doctor. There are two main problems concerning rural physicians: First, that there are too few of them; and, second, that the cost for many families is almost prohibitive.

Much of the volume is devoted to the economics of agriculture—increase in size of farms and in use of farm machinery, land taxation, farm cooperatives, labor, commercial farming, and agricultural credit. Human problems are not neglected, however, and adequate treatment is given to such topics as the decrease of farm population and the increase of rural non-farm dwellers, tenancy, the need for adequate housing, and rural electrification. Many rural and agricultural groups and organizations are portrayed. Whether these are formal or informal in nature, all play an important role in the everyday life of the men of the country. They are not just a part of his life . . . "they are his life. In and through them he expresses his hopes and disappointments to the rest of the world." This volume is a real contribution to literature in the field of community organization. Workers in the public welfare and agricultural rehabilitation fields will find it valuable, both for guidance and for reference. An appendix with case studies of rural communities in four specific geographic areas is included in this study.

SMITH, THOMAS LYNN. *The Sociology of Rural Life.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1940, 595 pp. $3.50.

This book presents a systematic and unified treatment of the entire rural field. Part I is a general introduction to the rural world; Part II discusses the rural population, its composition, characteristics, fertility and mortality, and migration; Part III treats rural social organization, land settlement, division, and tenure, the family, church, education, and government; Part IV discusses social processes of competition and conflict, cooperation, accommodation, and other activities in rural society; and Part V, the conclusion, touches briefly on culture change in rural areas and the future of the farmer.

The author brings out the importance of rural people to national welfare. Nearly one-half the total population of the United States is rural. Furthermore, the rural population is the seedbed of the national population. Rural migration is discussed in all its different aspects—rural-urban, interstate, and farm-to-farm movement, and migratory agricultural labor—with charts and diagrams making the historical as well as the present picture clear.

The serious social ills resulting from concentration of land ownership are cited by the author. There is an alarming growth in the number of farm laborers, indicating that America is developing a class of landless rural people. The workers have a much lower level of living than families with their own farms, even on poorer land; fixed routines prevent the workers from acquiring various skills and aptitudes. Consequently in time of depression large-scale agricultural regions are the hardest hit. Scientific insight is combined with case history data in this new approach to the social processes operative in rural society.

WORKS, GEORGE A. and LESSER, SIMON O. *Rural America Today.* University of Chicago Press, 1942, 450 pp. $3.75.

Rural America Today is a study of America's number one educational problem—the teaching of rural youth. Half of the nation's children are deprived of that educational opportunity which should be theirs by right as American citizens.

The crux of the rural education problem is "many children—few dollars." Rural areas with ever-increasing population and low incomes create an imperfect balance between educable school population and the relative ability to support educational programs within rural areas. Educational conditions and problems in rural areas are presented in all their harsh reality. Education does not pertain to schools alone, but to community living as well. Indispensable to a richer, fuller type of rural school program is the better-qualified, better satisfied teacher, in order that she may be able to relieve some of the deficiencies that exist in rural schools.

The local community, the state and the federal government all are responsible for the protection and promotion of the welfare and interests of the people in the rural areas of the nation. "Natural resources, industrial institutions, and all forms of social cooperation are valuable only insofar as they contribute to the welfare of the people."

When financial and other types of assistance from the states and the nation make possible the educational opportunities for rural children and the social facilities which are essential for satisfactory living and the perpetuation of democracy, then America will go forward free from the dangers which inherently threaten to destroy our social freedom.

ROAD
STRAIGHT
AHEAD

SOURCE MATERIALS AND FORTHCOMING VOLUMES

BROWN, INA CORRINE. *Socio-Economic Approach to Educational Problems.* U. S. Government Printing Office, 1942, 40c.

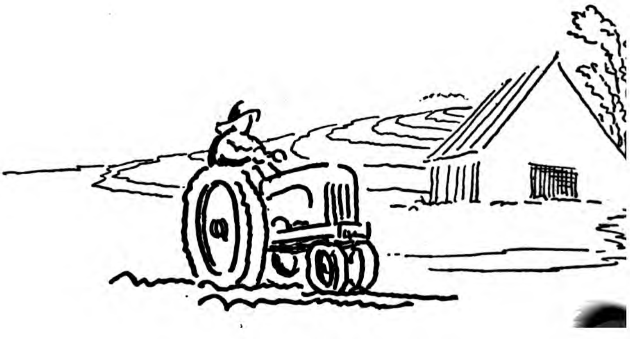
In this inexpensive report, Miss Brown presents clearly an excellent source of information concerning southern conditions. Especially to be commended are the brief but scholarly treatment of the backgrounds of contemporary American race relations, the description of the relationship between education and social and economic factors, and the competent picture of socio-economic conditions in the southern states.

BRUERE, MARTHA B. *Your Forests.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1946, 159 pp. $2.50.

Your Forests is a readable, well-documented book on forests of North America, how nurseries are run, extraction of products from wood, lumbering, training in forest service. This book is entertaining as well as instructive. "Farm people, most of whom have woodlots, should mark this book required reading."

COLCORD, JOANNA C. *Your Community.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1939, 246 pp. 85c.

Your Community is not a study of a particular community but a guide to the study of any community. It tells the investigator what to look for, indicates the kinds of facts that are significant with reference to resources and organization of a community, and describes the methods of procedure in finding the facts. The book contains a list of agencies for community planning and coordination, and references to books, pamphlets, and governmental reports.



JOHNSON, CHARLES S. *Statistical Atlas.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941, 355 pp. $4.00.

This volume gives a valuable analysis of statistical data concerning each of the counties of the southern states. These data based upon various years from 1930 to 1938, give an easily obtained and useful statistical picture of any southern county and provide a ready source for making local and sub-regional comparisons.

MYRDAL, GUNNAR. *An American Dilemma.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1944, 1180 pp. 2 v. $7.50.

An American Dilemma is the most comprehensive report on the Negro in American society which has yet been made. In two volumes such phases of Negro life as the Negro's participation in American economic life, political life, relation with the law, matters of social status and leadership, and Negro institutions and community expressions are among the topics discussed.

ODUM, H. W. *Southern Regions of the United States.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936, 628 pp. $4.00.

This comprehensive study and analysis of southern regional life and problems is a prime source of data for the careful reader and student of rural life. It ranks highest, both in information and inspiration, for intelligent southerners—rural or urban. The charts and maps are unexcelled.

PEARSON, HAYDN S. *Success on the Small Farm.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1946, 292 pp. $2.50.

Starting with nine points to keep in mind when buying a farm, Mr. Pearson gives a clear-cut discussion of irrigation, soil improvement and fertilization, tools and equipment, and the selection and care of poultry and livestock. Specialty crops that will bring in a high cash income from May to November are suggested. This book contains a wealth of valuable information and sound advice, not only for the beginner but also for the established farmer.

SCHULTZ, THEODORE W. *Agriculture in an Unstable Economy.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1946, 272 pp. $2.75.

This book, one of several independent research studies for the Committee for Economic Development, gives a detailed discussion not only of some of the basic problems within agriculture, but especially the maladjustments between agriculture and the other parts of the nation's economy. The author analyzes the two main problems of over-eroded and under-productive employment, and chronic instability of income—and shows their origin in agriculture's growing dependence on the exchange system. Throughout, the book emphasizes the "human" factor in agricultural problems, and makes concrete suggestions for policies that will contribute to a balanced relationship between agriculture and other parts of our national economy.

VANCE, RUPERT B. *All These People. The Nation's Human Resources in the South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946, 600 pp. $5.00.

In this book, Mr. Vance explores such questions as: To what extent is the nation's population likely to maintain itself in the future? To what extent does the nation possess unrealized human resources in the South and how can they be developed in terms of health, education, skill, and future leadership? How can we best employ these resources in the agrarian economy and how are they making the transition to the new industrial order in the South?

What social policies should we adopt for the conservation and development of our human resources after the war? What is to be our national population policy and how does the South fit in? To what extent can we rely on regional national planning to realize human adequacy for the welfare of the South and the nation?

VAN SICKLE, JOHN V. *Planning for the South.* Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1943, 255 pp. $2.75.

This book is a serious effort, characterized by sympathetic understanding, to apply the tools of economic analysis to the problems of the southern region. Full of opinions, programs, and formulas, the study offers a well-defined schedule of planning necessary for improvement of living in the South. Attention is confined to the inter-war period, with special reference to the New Deal. The volume, carrying the theme of regionalism, attempts to answer the question, "Why are economic rewards so much lower in the South than in other parts of the country?"